



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



48.1429.



Recently published, price 2s., boards,

LARGE AND SMALL FARM

AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

INCLUDING

**A VIEW OF THE PROGRESS OF THE DIVISION
THE SOIL IN FRANCE SINCE 1815.**

Translated from the French of H. PASSY, Peer of France, Member of the Institute, ex-Minister of Commerce, of Finance, &c. With Notes by

"This is a good and seasonable translation of the work of a very clever Frenchman. We recommend this work to the notice of our agricultural readers."
Westonian.

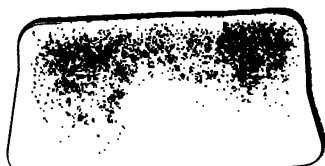
"The ablest discussion of this question in all its complex details we have seen is contained in H. Passy's Memoir, and we thank the translator for having placed it within the reach of English readers just at this time. The Notes which he has added, are very valuable."
Nonconformist.

"The subject is worthy the attention of all who wish well to their country; the statistics of H. Passy will be found invaluable."
Glasgow Examiner.

"An admirable work it is, well worthy of being read and thought upon by every citizen of Great Britain. We hope the name and rank of the author will insure many of them to give it a serious perusal."
Dumfries Courier.

ARTHUR HALL AND CO., 25, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

48.1429.







ARISTOCRACY,

CONSIDERED IN

ITS RELATIONS

WITH



THE PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION.

FROM THE FRENCH OF H. PASSY,

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE,
LATE PEER OF FRANCE, EX-MINISTER OF FINANCE, OF COMMERCE AND
AGRICULTURE, ETC.

WITH NOTES AND APPENDIX BY THE TRANSLATOR.

Latifundia perdidere Italiam, et jam vero provincias.—PLINY.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.

— The man of wealth and pride
Takes up the space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green.

GOLDSMITH.

LONDON :

ARTHUR HALL & CO. 25, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1848.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY R. CLAY, BREAD STREET HILL.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION	v
CHAPTER I.	
On Aristocracy, its origin, and the modifications which it undergoes.	1
CHAPTER II.	
On the distinctive character of the laws which constitute an Aristocracy	12
CHAPTER III.	
On the institutions which privilege the Aristocracy in the different monarchies of Europe; and Note by the Translator	19
CHAPTER IV.	
On the influence of the institutions destined to perpetuate the estates of the Aristocracy, on the composition of society	27
CHAPTER V.	
On the influence of the privileges of property on the amount of the population	30
CHAPTER VI.	
On the influence of the privileges of property on the progress of industry and wealth	37
CHAPTER VII.	
On aristocratic institutions in their connexion with manners	50
CHAPTER VIII.	
On the privileges of property, considered in connexion with the prosperity of the families who enjoy them	68
CHAPTER IX.	
On a territorial Aristocracy considered in connexion with public liberty	74

CHAPTER X.

On the principles to which the progress of civilization tends to give prevalence in the social organization	89
---	----

CHAPTER XI.

On certain doctrines opposed to the equality of rights	96
--	----

CHAPTER XII.

On certain more special objections taken against the equality of rights	109
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

On the influence of the equality of rights on the moral condition of a people	125
---	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

On the best system of organization under an equality of rights	137
--	-----

CHAPTER XV.

On the effects resulting from the predominance of the Aristocracy in England	148
--	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

On the effects of an equality of rights in France	181
---	-----

CONCLUSION	193
----------------------	-----

TRANSLATOR'S APPENDIX.

No. 1.—Containing extracts from the Speeches delivered in the French Chamber of Peers, in April 1826, by the Duke de Broglie, Count Molé, the Duke de Pasquier, Count Roy, the Duke de Cazes, and Count Lanjuinais	203
--	-----

No. 2.—Containing extracts from the writings of Dombasle, Guichard, Jung, S. Laing, Dr. Arnold, Dupin, deputy, Mignet, Sismondi, Ganlih, B. Constant, O'Connor, Beaumont, H. L. Bulwer, Jollivet, Launnay, Tocqueville, J. B. Say, Dr. Channing, J. Dymond, Sir Walter Scott, Jouy, W. J. Fox, Lord Brougham, Baron Dupin, Barante, Guizot, Alletz, M. de Jonnes, Blanqui, Dr. Graves, Dr. Wade, Sorel, Regnault, General Foy, Thiers, Howitt, Martineau, Mattu, Dr. Buchanan, H. Celliez, The Times, J. Duncan, and D. Jerrold	219
---	-----

INTRODUCTION.

AMONG the questions which have an important bearing on the welfare of European communities, there is none that has given rise to greater and keener controversy than that which respects the existence and maintenance of an Aristocracy. If there are points upon which the antagonist parties are generally agreed; if, for example, it is mutually granted, that it would be impossible to confide the governmental power to classes destitute of the advantages of independence and education, and that the business of legislation ought consequently to be entrusted to a select body of the nation, these parties are again at issue with respect to the selection of that body, and the rights and attributes which it ought to possess.

The cause of this divergence of opinion is sufficiently obvious. In all periods, opinions have been the offspring of situations and circumstances; and it would be very extraordinary if, in such a case, classes interested in preserving or recovering the immunities and exclusive privileges which their ancestors enjoyed, should be found in accord with other classes, who, after deriving from the pursuits of industry the means of emerging from their original abasement, claim a free participation in all the benefits and distinctions of society. We accordingly see

the opinions referred to marked with all the differences which the past has introduced into interests, positions, traditions and reminiscences. The greater number claim an equality of rights; and whilst they insist, that, leaving to the action of natural causes the care of producing all the superior men needed for the management of the more important affairs of the nation, governments should confine themselves to fixing the conditions of fortune indispensable for the proper exercise of political rights,—the partisans of the aristocratic system maintain, as a thing requisite for the stability of monarchies, that these rights should be perpetuated in the hands of a succession of men always animated by the same sentiments and impelled by analogous interests; and this series of persons it is, by the aid of privilege, by introducing or maintaining inequality in civil society—in fine, by rendering fixed, by confiscating, and concentrating, to the advantage of a favoured caste, a great portion of the property of the soil, that they seek to found and render eternal.

Here we behold a palpable conflict betwixt privilege, and the principle of equal rights :—the natural Aristocracy, —that Aristocracy which is composed of men of superior talents and endowments, whom a successful course of industry, or inherited fortune, has raised above the common level,—is it sufficient for the different requirements of our present state of civilization; or ought we still, to the detriment of the community, to raise up and maintain a factitious Aristocracy? This is the whole problem. Vainly has it been tried to solve it in only considering it, as the majority of previous writers have done, under partial points of view; in this world, a slight portion of good is always found by the side of evil, and the most vicious institutions are found to have something redeeming in them, often even some consequences of an unquestionable utility. Thus we are unable to appreciate any of them with a certainty of arriving at the truth, before having examined them in all their phases, and in their various influences upon the social

system which they contribute to form. It is more especially when the question relates to one of the institutions whose long and powerful influence has penetrated every part of the civil and political life of a people, that such an investigation is indispensable. We must then take a strict account of the motives and causes of its introduction, the changes worked in it by the progress of civilization, and the effects of its continuance on the general well-being; we must ascertain the extent of the advantages which it offers, see if other forms do not present them separated from the evils which we perceive in it, and above all, examine with the most scrupulous attention the facts on which the question rests.

Such is the order and method which I have prescribed to myself in this work, whose object is to consider Aristocracy in its relations with the progress and the requirements of civilization. After having thrown a glance at the causes of its rise in ages of barbarism, and of its decline in more enlightened times, I have examined the spirit and character of the laws necessary for its preservation; I have endeavoured to seize the influence of these laws on the state and progress of industry, of wealth, manners, and on the amount of the population; in a word, on all the elements of the greatness and felicity of a people. Then, inquiring if the services rendered by an Aristocracy really compensate society for the evils attached to the existence of privilege, I have considered the extent of the means of order and stability which may be offered by a system less opposed to natural equity; I have weighed the objections started to the equality of rights; I have established its advantages, and, invoking the aid of facts, I have drawn information from the effects produced in England by an Aristocracy of the soil, and in other countries, especially in France, from a legislation more favourable to a just partition of rights and fortunes. A subject so complicated, which embraces so many interests, and which, besides, gives rise to a multitude of questions of a political and economical order, presented

great and numerous difficulties. If I have not been able to surmount them, I have at least eluded none of them;—theories, maxims, objections, principles, adopted or contested by the two parties, have all been passed in review, discussed, examined, and fathomed as far as my powers would permit, and as much as possible in the most natural order. Let no one, however, expect to find in a work of the limited extent of this, an elaborate mass of details touching the different privileges which Aristocracies or bodies of nobility have enjoyed. Of what use would it have been to point out the different features of the laws whose object was fundamentally the same? What purpose would it have served to ascertain what differences existed between the majorats of Spain or Naples and the entails of France, England, and Germany; or what were the distinctive shades of variety in the customs which regulated the estates of the nobility in the different provinces of the same state? What it was necessary to establish perfectly and clearly was, the spirit, the purpose, and the consequences of that legislation; and in this last respect I have spared no pains in furnishing my readers with information.

There is still one point which may seem to necessitate a particular explanation. It may be a matter of surprise to some, not to find in this Treatise a special examination of the so much agitated question as to the comparative advantages of great and small farms. If I have omitted this question, it is because there seemed to me to be no proper connexion betwixt the size of estates and that of farms. Like all other industries, agriculture depends for its modes and forms, and for its advancement, on a number of causes, among which the state of the sciences and manufacturing arts, the abundance and circulation of capital, and the amount of the population, hold the most important rank. Like all other industries, if it prospers under laws favourable to the protection of property and persons, to the free use of capital, of lands, and of individual enterprise, it

declines under unjust and restrictive laws, which tend to keep the inferior classes in ignorance and poverty. Like all other industries, in fine, it seeks out and takes for itself the modes and forms at once the most advantageous for those who are engaged in it, and for society at large.

It would certainly not be difficult to support these assertions by unquestionable proofs; but that would not have been sufficient. So great is the number of conflicting views involved in this single question of rural economy, that I should have been forced to enter into a labyrinth of discussions and controversies almost without end; and it would have been necessary to refute, in a hasty manner, doctrines, and specious and intricate objections, the errors of which, having their origin in principles of political economy partially elucidated, or imperfectly understood, could only have been clearly exposed by a very extensive investigation of these principles themselves.

Such a labour required a separate work, an entire treatise; and how could I embody it in this volume without distracting the attention of the reader, and withdrawing it from considerations of a higher and more important kind? Other times will leave me, I hope, the leisure necessary for availing myself of the materials which I have collected for elucidating this branch of the question.

It will be seen that the present work is not composed to serve a particular occasion, but has a general and comprehensive scope and purpose. If the presentation of the project of a new law upon entails and successions, as the basis upon which it was sought to reconstruct the aristocratic edifice, have hastened the publication of the volume, this is the only connexion which it has with the project of the minister. It will be easy to see from a perusal of it, that I have unfortunately not had it in my power to profit by the lights thrown upon the subject in the course of the debates which have lately taken place in the Chamber of Peers.

My readers will doubtless find in the work some tedious

and negligent passages, and perhaps repetitions; a defect partly owing to the nature of the subject, and which a more severe revisal might have enabled me to correct, if I had not believed it incumbent on me to hasten the publication of a work, whose object is to throw light on a subject which at the present time so powerfully occupies public attention. So far, therefore, I have to solicit the indulgence of the reader, happy if my labours in offering some natural views of so grave a question shall assist him in forming a just idea of the forms and the principles of which our present situation and the onward progress of civilization require the application.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

The original work being more especially addressed to the French people, acquainted with their ancient and existing laws of succession, equally with the attempt made in 1826 to innovate on the latter, the Translator thinks it advisable, for the benefit of the less informed English reader, to subjoin an explanatory extract from the article "Primogeniture," in the "Political Dictionary," published in Paris in 1844.

"The feudal law of primogeniture was abolished by the decree of 4 August, 1789, and the law of 18 March, 1790. The civil code established the rule of an equal division among all the children of a family, except as to majorats, (subsequently abolished,) and the right reserved to a father of giving to one of his children, or to a stranger, a portion of his whole means and estate, which can never exceed a half. Equality is thus the ruling principle of the law, and inequality is merely facultive or permissive.

"In 1826, under the ministry of Villele, Corbiere, and Pyronnet, the Restoration proceeded covertly in its retrograde policy. In the matter of hereditary rights, it was impossible for them to return to the past. The constitution of society offered no means

of openly re-establishing the distinction formerly existing between the lands of the nobility and those of the inferior orders. But they wished to base the monarchy upon a nobility; and the latter being no longer able to support itself on the prestige of military service, an attempt was made to found it entirely on landed property. It was therefore proposed to allocate to the eldest son the whole testable part of the heritage paying three hundred francs of land-tax, unless the father should by a testament order an equal division of it. It was wished to make inequality the principle of the law, and equality facultative or optional.

"The sum of three hundred francs was exactly that at which the elective franchise was then fixed, so that it was in view, by means of primogeniture, to constitute in the privileged family an hereditary electoral right.

"This law was carried to the Chamber of Peers, where it encountered a strong opposition. Petitions without number, daily articles in the newspapers, pamphlets, and tracts, testified to the popular feeling against it. It was rejected by an immense majority on 8 April, 1826.

"And now, since the empire, with all the genius of its chief,—since the Restoration, with the authority of its traditions and the fatal necessities of its position, were unable to resuscitate the law of primogeniture, what future government will ever possess the power, although it may have the courage to renew the attempt?" &c.

It may be observed, that a report of the instructive debates which the projected law of 1826 gave rise to, is given in a "Treatise on Majorats, Entails, and Primogeniture, by M. Isambert, Deputy and Councillor in the Court of Cassation: 1 vol. 8vo. Paris, 1826;" from which it appears that the measure was opposed by all the most able practical statesmen of the day, such as Talleyrand, Molé, Broglie, Barante, Pasquier, Choiseul, Decazes, Simeon, Darau, Roy, and Lanjuinais. Extracts from some of the speeches of the opponents of the law will be found in the Appendix No. 1.

The promise held out by M. Passy, of a separate treatise on the agricultural branch of the question, was only redeemed by him on 24 August, 1846, in a "Memoir" then read before the "Academy of Moral and Political Sciences," and afterwards published with a

supplement in the "Journal des Economistes," Nos. 34, 38, 40, and 57. An English translation of this work has since appeared, entitled "On Large and Small Farms, and their influence on the Social Economy; including a View of the Progress of the Subdivision of the Soil in France since 1815." To this work reference is now made, as amply refuting the assertions of M'Culloch in regard to the deteriorating effects of the French law of succession on agriculture.

The present work was published in Paris in 1826. Since then, two revolutions have occurred in France, both equally unlooked for, and precipitated by circumstances. If the last of them, by changing the form of the government, seems to contradict the author's assumption as to the permanency of monarchy in Europe, neither of these great events tends to detract from the soundness of his conclusions as to the injustice and inexpediency of the laws of entail and primogeniture. By the latter opinions we have occasion to know that the author still firmly abides.

THE TRANSLATOR.

Paris, September 1848.

ARISTOCRACY CONSIDERED

IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION.

CHAPTER I.

ARISTOCRACY—ITS ORIGIN—AND THE MODIFICATIONS WHICH IT UNDERGOES.

IF amongst old established nations there are often found to exist laws and institutions at variance with public opinion, there can be nothing of the kind at the origin of societies. Equal in strength and in misery, still free from the powerful influence of habit, reminiscences, and doctrines, men only accept the rules that are recommended to them by utility ; and every power which then rises up, is essentially the result of the necessities inherent in their modes of existence.

Such, without doubt, was the origin of Aristocracy, —at least, the feature common to all nascent societies, is, the grouping of their members around a small body of chiefs, and the formation of an aristocratic patronage, under whose shade the first germs of civilization flourish.

Look at India, Ethiopia, and Egypt : from the most remote antiquity in these countries privileged orders held the laborious classes under a withering yoke. Look at the States of ancient Greece, and you will find slavery to be the fixed and sorrowful lot of the masses ; and never did the terms, Aristocracy and Democracy,

signify in them any thing else than the distribution, more or less unequal, of political rights among freemen.

Athens, for example, was, we are told, a democracy; Sparta, an aristocracy :—be it so ; but in Athens as well as in Sparta, were there not from fifteen to twenty slaves to one citizen ? And of what importance, near to this line of demarcation betwixt servitude and freedom, could be the faint distinctions that separated from each other the individuals of the governing body ?

It was the same in ancient Rome. Independently of a great number of slaves, we find in it two classes of citizens unequally treated by the institutions : to the one were attributed honours, public employments, military commands, and sacerdotal dignities—to none of which could the people aspire ; and the distinction of castes was so rigidly preserved, that even matrimonial alliances were forbidden betwixt families separated by privilege.

In the Roman empire as in ancient Spain—in Gaul as in Germany, we invariably find a warlike aristocracy protecting the infancy of the people, and watching over the development of social order.

Such was also the form assumed by the societies which were organized in the midst of the ruins of the Roman empire. The feudal system struck its roots in the soil ; and when laws came to regulate it, they only caused to be recognised a pre-existing fact; and consecrated a social state already formed by the force of circumstances.

The origin of Feudalism has been the object of laborious researches. It has been considered by some as the result of a victorious race establishing itself

among the vanquished, and by others as a feature of the Germanic civilization. These views of the subject would suffice, if we were merely to consider the chain of obligations, which descending from the Suzerain connected him with the lowest vassal ; but if that order of things, whatever may be its importance, be seen to merge into another much more vast and comprehensive,—namely, the subjection of the masses to some warlike or privileged family—what social form was ever more general and universal ? Carried by the Tartars, as Montesquieu has remarked, into all their settlements in Asia, the Europeans found it in full vigour in Mexico, in Peru, and even in the Canary islands, where the serfs cultivated the soil exclusively reserved for the nobility ; and, in our own time, is it not under a similar regime that the Japanese live, the inhabitants of Ceylon, those of the greater part of the Indian Archipelago, the least barbarous people of the Pacific Ocean,—and, in a word, almost all the societies which are yet engaged in the struggles and labours of a nascent civilization ?

It is, moreover, easy to detect the causes of the rise of the aristocratic power : they belong to the establishment of the pastoral or agricultural life. In the savage state, it is sufficient that the most valiant or experienced assume, for the time being, the direction of a hostile expedition or a hunting excursion ; but, as soon as the community applies itself to the cultivation of the soil, the wants attached to this new mode of existence imperatively calling for a more stable authority, every thing conspires to transform into an hereditary right the superiority which the small number owed to its purely personal qualities. At this period, the land

is only a vast arena, whose possession is fiercely contested by hostile tribes, and even in the bosom of each tribe by rival families. On the one hand, it is necessary to have skilful chiefs to watch with care over the safety of the hordes, exposed to aggressions the more formidable that pillage and extermination are their ordinary consequences; on the other, the default of a coercive power makes the rights of property insecure, leaving the weak at the mercy of the strong, and obliging individuals to implore the support of men whose ascendancy is recognised. This support they have only one means of procuring; it is, by paying for it by services, by abandoning a portion of the fruits of their labour; it is, in a word, by placing themselves in a state of dependence on their protectors: in this manner do they end by ranging themselves around a small body of eminent warriors, and the population divides itself into two classes, the one of servants and tributaries, the other of masters, invested with all the elements of a domination which the hereditary superiority of wealth enables them to transmit to their descendants.

Historical facts are not wanting to support the accuracy of these views.

Thucydides informs us, that in the ancient times of Greece, the weak found it to be their interest to submit themselves to the powerful, and that the towns followed the example. Among the Gauls and the Germans, men gave themselves up the one to the other. Such was the object of patronage in Rome. In the middle ages, we saw the majority of the freemen, in the impossibility in which they were placed to cause their rights of property to be respected, make

a cession of their lands to the neighbouring seigneurs, and thus sacrifice to the necessity of protection their independence, as well as a portion of their incomes. This state of things is the faithful image of the necessities which, in the times of barbarism, the members of society laboured under. Exposed to spoliation and outrage, the weak could only find shelter and repose behind the buckler of certain chiefs, whose wealth and authority increased in the ratio of the number of their dependents.

At a later period, other circumstances completed the consolidation of the aristocratic supremacy. Society developed itself: with an augmentation of the means of subsistence, the result of the progress of industry, the people multiplied, and by little and little, social relations and interests becoming extended, diversified, and complicated, the skill requisite for public business was found to exceed the capacity of a multitude doomed to painful toils. From that time it was on the great, that is, on the rich, because they alone were in a position favourable to the cultivation of their minds, that the task devolved of providing for the wants of a growing civilization: legislation, war, justice, all became concentrated in their hands; and as they did not forget to impress on the laws made under their influence a direction fitted to extend, strengthen, and perpetuate their natural advantages, in a short time the people, dazzled by the hereditary lustre and power of the privileged families, became accustomed to consider the offshoots of these families as their masters.

And let none cite against the influence which I attribute to the intellectual inferiority of the subject classes, the extreme ignorance of the seigneurs of the middle

ages. These men, indeed, were unable to read, but their education sufficed for the wants of the time: freed from the cares of their subsistence, they passed their youth in training themselves to the use of arms; they learnt how to dispense justice to their vassals; they made themselves acquainted with the forces and designs of their neighbours; they knew how to meet them in battle, and to preserve their domains from invasion and pillage. Perhaps, there never was so great a difference in point of intelligence betwixt classes as in those ages of violence and anarchy. Such was the brutality of the serfs, that, incapable of directing their own forces, they were obliged, in the revolts provoked by the tyranny of their masters, to seize upon some one of gentle birth, whom they compelled, under pain of death, to assume a command which none of themselves was able to exercise. Other examples attest this inferiority. At two different periods in England, and more than a century after their admission into Parliament, the Members of the Commons, consulted by Richard II. on the subject of a treaty of peace with France, declared, that they referred themselves to the barons, knights, and judges, inasmuch as they could form no idea of the points in dispute, and were even unacquainted with the terms made use of in adjusting them. It is also known, that in Sweden the Chamber of the Peasantry is often unwilling to vote till after having been enlightened by the deliberations of the nobles and the clergy. How, then, could men so conscious of their incapacity fail to consider the privileges of the aristocracy as a just recompence for those services which it alone could render to the community?

The people have often been accused of a blind presumption. Interested declaimers have been pleased to represent them as rejecting with an ignorant impatience the check of the most wise and tutelary laws. History shows us the reverse of this to have been the case. Read its annals : far from justifying this blame, they show, that there is in the governed such a love of order and disposition to submission, that they invariably allow the government to go beyond its legitimate bounds, and to arrogate to itself those prerogatives whose injustice strips them of their most sacred rights. Is it needful to cite other proofs of this than the slavery under which the populations of antiquity groaned, or the humiliations endured up to our time by the most numerous classes ? True, there have been revolts caused by the most intolerable suffering ; revolutions that have substituted for iniquitous and oppressive forms of organization, institutions more favourable to equity ; but these events even attest, that if there be in man an instinctive justice in advance of the laws and leading to their reform, there exists also in the masses a sort of social conscience, which makes their intellectual capacity the standard and measure of their pretensions in the matter of political rights. So long as the masses remain bent down under the yoke of ignorance and destitution, unfitted for taking a part in public affairs, they are seen to resign themselves to a noxious but necessary dependence, and an aristocracy disposes freely of their destiny.

This state of things, however, has a necessary term. The natural attribute of wealth and intelligence, power, always tends to follow their diffusion : it extends, concentrates, or contracts itself with them ;

and the greater part of revolutions are only the consequences of their displacement.

In order that an aristocracy should preserve an immutable supremacy, it would be necessary that no change should take place in the intellectual and economical condition of the community ;—and that is scarcely possible. Industry is essentially progressive ; it develops itself even in spite of the obstacles which legislation opposes to it ; and in proportion as labour, better directed, obtains a higher remuneration, the laborious classes naturally acquiring wealth and intelligence, the dominating caste loses something of its superiority. Nor is this all : classes who enlighten and strengthen themselves, learn the value of those rights which ignorance had caused them to abdicate ; in a short time, interest prompts their recovery, and as power passes to their side, it becomes more and more difficult for the weakened aristocracy to retain under its yoke subjects eagerly bent on obtaining liberties, alike necessary for their moral dignity and the increase of their material well-being.

In Rome, for example, we behold the poor plebeians endure for a long time all the outrages of a proud and rapacious aristocracy ; but no sooner did they count in their ranks men endowed with all the talents necessary for public affairs, than they insisted on a greater equality of rights. In vain did the patricians plead their services ; in vain did they recall their victories, their triumphs, and the glory with which they had covered the standards of the republic ;—the ancient relations of strength and intelligence were changed ; the people, become rich, informed, and numerous, were able to enforce their just claims ; a compromise became

necessary, and the people were admitted to a share of the dignities previously reserved for the minority.

It unfortunately happened, that in antiquity there were insurmountable barriers which arrested the benefits arising from the progress of industry. Excluded from all civil rights, as well as from all means of improving his condition, the slave assisted in chains at the spectacle of the struggles of free men ; and, whatever might be their issue, no advantage accrued to him. The ancients dearly expiated the injustice and cruelty of their institutions. With them industry was not a beneficent power, whose development increased and gave life to the elements of social felicity : far from that, by multiplying the number of slaves, the accumulation of riches nourished all the vices peculiar to slavery, and so became that culminating point of fortune on reaching which all the states of antiquity were seen to perish.

We witness more happy results in those societies wherein several causes—of which one of the most powerful was a religion, which, in preaching equality before God, favoured it on earth—first slackened, and then entirely broke the chains imposed on the multitude. In Christian Europe, the immorality of the social relations did not poison the fruits of civilization ; and it was among the masses that their beneficial effects were felt. In proportion as labour widened the sphere of production, the possession of lands ceased to be the only means of wealth and consideration :—moveable capital, the offspring of arts and manufactures, became the portion of the classes that created it ; and in the course of centuries, its progressive increase raised them in intelligence and comfort.

A contrast truly remarkable ! The same tendencies of civilization, which in ages of barbarism fasten on the people the yoke of the minority, undo their own work in a more advanced state of things. Nor has any one a right to complain : the aristocracy preserves its wealth, and even profits by the improvements made in agriculture ; but it is in the hands of the industrial classes that are amassed the riches accruing from arts and commerce :—these classes increase in number, knowledge, and respectability,—every day brings them nearer to the ruling caste ; and the time arrives when they take, perforce, in the political order of things, the place to which their importance entitles them.

It is quite natural that men, whose intelligence has been ripened, and whose sentiments refined, by the circumstances of their situation, should aspire to liberty ; but, as if they had need of a stronger impulse, advancing civilization creates a law, which prompts them to protest against a domination whose inconveniences are felt to increase in proportion as the circle of society widens. In fact, however suitable aristocratic forms might be to times when war was the great business of society, agriculture the sole industry, and landed estate the only means of distinction, these forms, in general, present no guarantee for new social existences, for the modes of individual and collective activity which the wants of a more advanced civilization give birth to. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the artisans sought in vain for the protection of the powers that were : exposed to all the exactions of the feudal Barons, no institution afforded them protection ; there existed neither laws to shield them from the attacks of violence, nor even Courts of Justice sufficiently enlightened to decide

the differences arising among themselves. It therefore belonged to themselves alone to provide for the wants of their condition ; and they did so. By combining their strength, they presented a formidable front to the fighting order : skilfully profiting by conjunctures, they purchased rights and privileges from the king or the great vassals, and by little and little, communes were established. In a short time, other industrial persons came to seek an asylum in these communities, which were distributed into tribes and trading bodies ; each corporation had its chief, its funds, regulations, and banners,—and liberty, after having established itself in the towns, gained a footing in the rural districts.

Still we must not seek, in the motives which directed the efforts of emancipation at that period, for the slightest trace of modern liberty. Like the aristocracy of the preceding ages, the communal associations had only their own class-interests in view. Composed of men who, on reaching an easy condition, united themselves to take up a position in the bosom of a society still exposed to the scourge of anarchy, they were only little self-constituted powers—petty aristocracies detached from the inferior orders, and which, taking possession of the rights and powers within their reach, strove to extend them to the injury of the public. Communes, corporations, companies, guilds, all followed the same course,—all assumed to themselves privileges opposed to the general weal. But according as civilization made way, as industry in its progress enriched and enlightened the bulk of the population, these corporate bodies, tired of the obstacles which their privileges created, claimed the benefits attendant on a perfect equality of rights.

Such was the march of events that insensibly freed the inferior orders from the yoke of the aristocracy. Slaves in ages of barbarism, the people sought to break their galling fetters as soon as with wealth they acquired the intelligence necessary for making a proper use of liberty.

It was, nevertheless, not without struggles and conflicts that they reached this point. If facts give birth to institutions, these, in their turn, react upon facts; and the aristocracy, protected by exclusive and spoliatory laws, which it had enacted in the days of its omnipotence, derived from them immense means of conservation and resistance. For a long time, it braved all the efforts of a population desirous of freedom; and in spite of the events of the French Revolution, we see it still exercise in the greater number of the countries of Europe a domination as pernicious to the independence as it is to the material interests of the more numerous orders of the people.

Of the privileges which it thus enjoys, we propose to give an account in the sequel.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE LAWS WHICH CONSTITUTE AN ARISTOCRACY.

"AMONGST men united in societies, we remark," says Beccaria, "a continual tendency to concentrate privileges, power, and fortune, in the hands of the minority, and to award to the many only depression and misery." This fact is easily accounted for. It is not in man to

make a disinterested use of any sort of pre-eminence, whatever it may be ; and as in the infancy of a people an imperative necessity calls the minority to preside over its early institutions, it follows that this minority will give them the direction which is most conducive to advance its own interests, irrespective of those of the majority. Such in all ages has been the conduct of the powers of this world. Clergy, communes, monarchs ; administrative, or judicial hierarchies ; all those that have possessed power, have used it so as to promote their private advantage or ambition ;—all ruling bodies have, in their turns, encroached on the general rights, and have made the spoils of the multitude their pedestals.

The families, who at the outset had acquired a power that was entirely indispensable, had more than others the means of increasing and consolidating the advantages of their position. Invested with the double distinction of wealth and knowledge, they had only, in order to perpetuate it to their descendants, to transform the fact of possession into a law ; and such was really the object of the laws which they dictated. Lands, wealth, honours, political prerogatives, all the elements of social domination, were reserved for themselves, and privilege constituted them into a real aristocracy.

Let us glance at the different legislative scaffoldings which supported the dominating classes at the top of the social scale, and we shall find one feature common to the whole of them ;—all of them have been so many contrivances for wringing from the people, in order to bestow upon the minority, the blessings designed by Providence to recompense the efforts of all. “ The Sudra (or people) exists to serve Brama,” says the

law of Menou, "but not to amass riches,—for the riches of the slave being displeasing to Brama, he ought to possess nothing that is not at the disposal of his master."

Such was the spirit of the Greek and Roman institutions. Under their dominion the masses, unpitiously despoiled of every right, gradually descended to the condition of animals, whose labours supplied abundance to the men who were free.

It is besides easy to conceive, that if there can be no aristocracy without privileges, and that if all privilege is necessarily an infringement of the common law, we may expect to find great differences in the advantages which they confer. In this respect, the difference of situation always exercises a great influence ; and, as nothing can less resemble the ruling aristocracies of republics than the bodies of nobles formed under a monarchy, it is betwixt their respective privileges that we find the greatest disparity. Absolute masters in the state, deriving from the exercise of their sovereign functions the strength requisite for their preservation, republican aristocracies usually confine themselves to depriving the people of all participation in public affairs. Among them, the desire of riches yields to the fear of the dangers attached to their accumulation ; and as it is nearly impossible to rob the humbler classes without producing this result, their laws, instead of consecrating the inalienability of landed property, have always a tendency to maintain a just equilibrium among the private fortunes of individuals.

How could a monarchical nobility, without the support of territorial wealth, defend its prerogatives, exposed, as they are, to the hatred of the people, and the

aggressions of royalty ? Far from having to dread the concentration of property, it is only by availing itself of the advantages attached to opulence, that it can keep up an imposing appearance ; and the safety of the caste depends entirely on the fortune of its chiefs. Thence originate a multitude of laws, made, as jurists tell us, in the view of preserving the name, arms, and splendour of noble families. Thence arose the law of primogeniture, which prevents the dispersion of the estates of each of them ; thence came entails, trusts, and lineal destinations, which ensure to these families the irrevocable possession of them. If the nobility had not been firmly entrenched upon a space the access to which was barred to the rest of society, it would long ago have fallen into obscurity.

Among the people of Slavonic origin, in Poland and in Russia, another form of legislation provides for the maintenance of the aristocratical supremacy. The nobility, in adjudging to itself the exclusive right of owning the land, takes away from the enslaved classes all hope of raising themselves to independence. Under the dominion of a system so entirely exclusive, it was useless for the nobility to occupy themselves with the situation of their families ; thus the allodial regime prevails in these countries, and all the children of a noble participate equally in the paternal inheritance.

Such were the principal features of the institutions, by the aid of which, privileged castes placed the elements of their power out of the reach of the accidents of fortune. Amidst all the diversity that distinguishes them, it is clearly seen, that these institutions had only one means of arriving at the object in view,—the confiscation, to the profit of the minority, of all, or a

great part, of the advantages of society. At times, as at Berne or Venice, it was political rights which the reigning aristocracy withheld from their subjects ; at other times, as in monarchies, the body of the nobility seized on the sources of wealth ; and what remains clear is, that every where, according to the degree of stringency and iniquity in the laws which confer a privilege on the minority, are the well-being and happiness of nations affected and deteriorated. What countries, for example, have become at all times so easy a prey to neighbouring races, as Egypt, and India ? It was because, oppression and misery having extinguished the sentiment of patriotism in the hearts of the multitude, it signified little to them what were the names of the masters, who could not add to their degradation. We know how, in the ancient republics, the slavery of the working classes, thwarting the results of civilization, made the wealth of these states the enemy of liberty. See to how many disorders the injustice of the social relations gave rise ! The free man despising labour, lest he should be classed with the slave, the towns were by degrees filled with a populace whom indigence and sloth attached to the heels of the ambitious. Enslaved and wretched, the population of the country gradually perished ; thence ensued those wars of pillage and extermination, in which the vanquished had nothing to expect but slavery or death ; and thence came also the unanimous opinion, that conquest was the only object of society. Another singular phenomenon which marks the civilization of the ancients, but which is explained by the same cause, is the state of perfection attained by the fine arts ; whilst, on the contrary, the moral and political sciences remained in their infancy.

And how indeed could these sciences flourish in states where the greater number were stripped of all their natural rights ? How could writers, inhaling so tainted an atmosphere, raise themselves to the high and pure considerations of justice and humanity ? How could they feel the sublime laws of morality, and discover the benevolent intentions of Providence, taught as they were, to look upon the degradation and misery of their fellow-beings as an invincible necessity of social order—as an inflexible decree of destiny ?

Among ourselves, also, the laws that robbed the greater number produced results proportionate to their severity. Where was the torch of arts and civilization first relumed ? In those countries where servitude disappeared soonest—in the republics of Italy, and the free towns of Germany, where men, able to raise themselves to wealth by labour, put forth all the strength of their intellectual and physical faculties : agriculture, science, the fine arts, trade, manufactures, all flourished anew, all revived under hands freed from the shackles of feudal servitude ; and the rest of Europe, to become prosperous, had only to follow in the path which they struck out. At the present day, we see what are the consequences of the inequalities that exist in the economical and moral condition of nations. Misery, ignorance, slavery ; such is still, among those of the Slavonic race, the sad lot of the people, indifferent to the perfecting of an industry whose fruits would merely serve to increase the pride of their masters. Comfort, education, and liberty, are, on the contrary, the boon of those who were once the serfs of the feudal barons. It is because in France, as well as in Germany and England, the nobility not having been able to dispossess

entirely the inferior orders, the latter have had, in property, a base of action, a place of refuge for displaying their industrial powers, and by the progressive accumulation of commercial riches, raising themselves to better destinies.

These facts are positive and incontestable; they attest the importance of distributive justice in matters of government, and show how much the people have had to suffer from the laws created by privilege. It has been indeed said, that at the time of their institution—the simple expression of circumstances—privileges were natural and necessary. Such is not my opinion: no doubt, there are times—we cannot deny it—when the masses can only find repose and security by submitting themselves to a small number of eminent chiefs; but since it only required the force of things to create a necessary aristocracy, is it not clear, that in after times the same cause would continue, without the aid of privilege, to raise to the top of the social edifice the superiorities and the powers which these times call for? Amongst ignorant nations, in particular, laws do not precede facts: it is not privilege that created a necessary aristocracy which existed before it; it is aristocracy, on the contrary, which, abusing the advantages of its situation, finds in privilege a factitious and pernicious support. From thenceforth, to the action of natural tendencies is joined the influence of those that are artificial; and society, the victim of an unjust and spoliatory usurpation, has to struggle painfully against the obstacles which oppose to the progress of its well-being, and the development of its powers, institutions that are oppressive and antagonistic to the various and increasing wants of civilization.

We shall next proceed to examine with care, the spirit and the consequences of the laws which constitute the aristocracies of the monarchies of Europe.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE INSTITUTIONS WHICH PRIVILEGE THE ARISTOCRACY IN THE DIFFERENT MONARCHIES OF EUROPE.

I HAVE already spoken of the differences which mark the institutions of the nobility of the several monarchies of Europe. In those of Slavonic origin, a martial nobility, by depriving the serfs of all right to territorial property, founded their domination upon an unassailable basis. Vainly did there spring up in the lower ranks individuals endowed with superior faculties : incapable of acquiring the smallest capital, they dragged out their existence in a state of slavery ; and industry, frozen at its source, had no means of expanding itself.

The institutions which prevailed in monarchies of a feudal origin, were less exclusive, and much more complicated. Taking their rise in various circumstances, they underwent numerous modifications : from persons, the bonds of vassalage passed to lands : several revolutions had successively changed them from grants into freeholds, and from freeholds into fiefs ; and it was only during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, that the fiduciary or entail system, to which the nobility owed the preservation of their prerogatives, assumed the form under which we now propose to consider it.

In feudal Spain, the nobility was not at first organized into castes ; each family of which it was composed,

derived its rights and powers from the domains which it possessed ; and the laws, without taking away from the members of the inferior classes the possibility of bettering their condition by acquiring property, were confined to watching over the preservation of estates and the supremacy of privileges. Two means principally favoured these objects ; the one sanctioning the exclusive right of primogeniture in successions, the other, the establishment of entails. By means of the first, the domain passed in all its entirety to the eldest son of the family ; by the second, no possessor being permitted to alienate, sell, or burden the property irrevocably settled on the descendants, each privileged family was enabled to preserve its opulence. It is easy to perceive, that without entails, primogeniture would only have imperfectly served the interests of the nobility ; but combined with entails, which substantially conferred on each heir in succession the mere usufruct or life-rent of the estate, it did more than guarantee an hereditary superiority,—it favoured the progressive increase of it.

For, suppose the soil of a province divided into a hundred estates entailed and transmissible in the line of primogeniture, and observe what influence time will produce on this distribution of wealth. Not only cannot the number of the original owners be augmented, but as nothing prevents any one of them from succeeding to several inheritances, it is clear that the gradual concentration of property must follow, from deaths, from the extinction of lines, and, in a word, from all the accidents which break in upon and disturb the established order of succession. Thus, in place of the hundred original families, you will have eighty, fifty,

and even fewer : what a century may not produce, two will accomplish ; till at last some houses, invested with the totality of the property of the caste, will become possessed of enormous wealth.

This is not all : whilst no portion of the property held under the fetters of an entail can escape from its holders, the latter are at liberty to acquire lands offered to public competition, and the accumulation of wealth in their hands favours their means of doing so. In this manner all the relations of territorial wealth are turned to their advantage ; and it only depends on themselves to increase their estates to the detriment of the inferior classes.

Such were the advantages which the feudal nobility derived from the laws. Still, I do not mean to assert that these laws had positively such a result in view : on the contrary, it is quite clear that the right of primogeniture was the natural consequence of the obligations originally impressed on property—obligations, which the division of the land among several heirs would have infallibly defeated. In regard to entails, they equally arose from the right of reversion, which, in the event of the line of possessors becoming extinct, the Suzerain had reserved to himself over the lands which he had conceded. But whatever may have been the origin or object of these laws, it is not less certain that they became in succeeding ages the real foundation of the splendour of the nobility. By placing the fortunes of the privileged families out of the reach of the accidents of fortune, and investing historic names with the durable *éclat* of hereditary opulence, they assured to these families a train of dependents, whose strength made them formidable. It was these laws alone which

enabled them to traverse, in all their splendour, a long series of ages ; it is they alone that yet support them in a great part of Europe ; finally, they alone present a base on which aristocracy can be re-established in those countries where time has worked its overthrow ; and we accordingly find them the objects of predilection or regret amongst the partisans of an inequality of rights.

I do not consider it necessary to enumerate that host of secondary rights, immunities, exemptions from burdens, and various other prerogatives, on which the nobility seized, and which, like the privileges of property, tended to preserve and extend its influence and well-being to the prejudice of the masses. Besides, these privileges were not uniform, although in all monarchies they were directed to the same end. In England, for example, where the lands are held directly of the Sovereign, entails did not extend beyond the second degree ; and that term once reached, it is necessary to renew them to keep them in force. This difference arose from the Crown finding more advantage in the exercise of the right of forfeiture, in cases of felony, than in the simple right of reversion. I may also remark, that Germany, a country of hierarchical distinctions and ancestral prejudices, was the last to renounce the allodial system, and adopt institutions under whose shade the nobility of France and Spain had so long flourished.

What is important at present, is, to discern the consequences of these institutions ; and here there is no room for mistake, so much is their injustice evident and palpable. By confiscating to the profit of a small number of privileged families a vast portion of the

social patrimony, not only do these institutions take from the masses the power of arriving at the distinctions and advantages of property, but moreover, by favouring the gradual concentration of wealth, they operate so as to retain them under the humiliating yoke of misery and vice. There are no means of depriving these laws of so baneful an influence. Could we even succeed, in order to mitigate the evils of the inequality of fortunes, in preventing the union of entailed lands in the same hands, the principle of exclusion would not less exist to the injury of the rest of the community, and never would wealth find its natural level. Thus is it probable, that but for the prejudices and the moral causes which condemn the dominating castes to a ruinous idleness, and militate in favour of the active classes, the whole soil of a country would, by degrees, have passed into the hands of those who, at liberty to add to the wealth exclusively conferred on them, had no diminution of it to fear.

It is obvious that institutions so generally diffused, and which exercise so much influence over the condition of the population, must have early excited the attention of publicists; and few questions have, in fact, been oftener and more differently treated. Some, seeing in majorats and entails the only guarantee for upholding an aristocracy which they deem necessary to social order, have stood forward in their defence. Others, and these are the most numerous party, have considered them as essentially contrary to the best interests of the community. Such, amongst others, was the opinion of the illustrious Bacon, as early as the seventeenth century, who was followed by Lord Kames, Adam Smith, Paley, and more recently by:

E. Sandford, in his *Treatise on Entails*. In France, Chancellor Agusseau, the Economists, the Jurisconsults, who composed the Civil Code, declared themselves against laws that impeded the circulation of property. In Spain and Italy, Campomanes, Veri, Filangieri, and Cuoco, gave utterance to the same opinions. And in fact, independently of the injustice of the preference accorded to the eldest son of a family, fiduciary laws exercise over all parts of the social economy an influence, whose pernicious effects are apparent to all. The examination of them will form the subject of the following chapters.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

In our day in Britain, primogeniture and entails have found their principal defenders in the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*, the organs of the two great aristocratical parties the Whigs and the Tories, and their partisans, Malthus, McCulloch, Ramsay, Chalmers, and Alison. To these parties may be opposed a body of writers who have advocated the cause of equal rights, such as Godwin, Bentham, J. Mill, Colonel P. Thomson, Dr. Wade, W. J. Fox, Miss Martineau, Mrs. Marcet, Mrs. London, S. Laing, G. Ensor, W. Howitt, H. L. Bulwer, Dr. Channing, A. Everett, Dr. Arnold, J. Dymond, Lady Morgan, J. McIntyre, W. Thornton, Dr. Graves, Dr. Buchanan, J. Duncan, the writers in the *Westminster Review* (early series), *Tait's Magazine*, *Douglas Jerrold's Magazine*, the *Eclectic Review*, *Howitt's Journal*, the *People's Journal*, and the editors of a considerable number of the London and provincial newspapers.

But it is in France that the laws which regulate the successions of land have most occupied the attention of statesmen and publicists.

At the English revolutions of 1649 and 1688, the effects of our feudal laws of succession on the political and social state of the people, seem never once to have engaged the thoughts of the most

ardent friends of liberty. "Our ancestors," says Sir James Mackintosh, "were far from feeling the force of such sublime truths, nor was the public mind in Europe, in the seventeenth century, sufficiently enlightened and matured for the grand enterprises of legislation." In 1776, Adam Smith, in his "Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," after forcibly denouncing both primogeniture and entails, stated, "The right of primogeniture, however, still continues to be respected; and as of all institutions it is the best fitted to support the pride of family distinctions, it is still likely to endure for many centuries. In every other respect, nothing can be more contrary to the real interests of a numerous family, than a right which, in order to enrich one, beggars all the rest of the children," &c. This great writer little anticipated that, in the United States of America, the right of primogeniture was shortly destined to disappear; that in less than twenty years from the time he wrote, the same was to happen in the greatest of European states, France, and that the example of the latter would be followed by the Low Countries, Hesse, Nassau, Wurtemberg, Baden, the Rhenish provinces, the whole cantons of Switzerland, and by nearly all the states of Italy, countries in which the invading armies of France left behind them the traces of its advanced civilization.

It is not surprising that the Scotch economist, writing in a country dominated by the most powerful aristocracy that the world ever saw, should have miscalculated the endurance of the feudal laws that support it. The influence of this privileged caste has hitherto prevented these laws from receiving the degree of attention which they merit from the inferior classes, and especially from our public writers. In France, where, since the first revolution, an aristocracy can scarcely be said to have existed, such an influence has not been felt; and we accordingly find the subject in question treated in the most searching and enlightened spirit by a numerous body of writers. Another cause of the comparatively greater attention bestowed on this subject in France is, that its political economists have not, like the English, confined their inquiries to the causes of the creation of wealth, but have extended them to the most effectual means of diffusing and distributing it. Writers on social economy, adopting the same philanthropic views, have been led to advert to the law of succession, and to dwell on the beneficial, social, and

moral consequences that flow from it; while its political writers, equally alive to its importance, have closely examined the effects of the law on the freedom and stability of the general government. It is owing mainly to these causes, that among the works that have appeared in France during the last thirty or forty years, not only on jurisprudence, but on the history of the Revolution, the science of government, political economy, agriculture, trade, and morals, there is scarcely one in which the existing law of succession is not brought into view in a more or less prominent manner, and noticed in terms of approbation. Without pretending to enumerate the whole of them, the following names—many of them of persons possessing a European reputation, and of all shades of political opinions—may be cited.

POLITICAL ECONOMISTS.—Ganlih, Roederer, Chaptal, Storch, Marquis de Garnier, J. Droz, J. B. Say, H. Say, Dunnoyer, Comte, Baron Dupin, Duchatel, Sismondi, O'Connor, Blanqui, Wolloski, Buret, Michel Chevalier, Rossi, J. Garnier, Reybaud, Moreau de Jonnes, A. V. Bargesmont, Harcourt, Delaborde, Dupuynode, Degerando, Dertutt de Tracy, Bastiat, Faucher, the writers in the *Journal des Economistes*, and the *Annuaire de l'Economie Politique*.

POLITICIANS, HISTORIANS, AND PUBLICISTS.—Talleyrand, Molé, Broglie, Pasquier, Roy, Decazes, Choiseul, Barante, Pastoret, Merlin of Douai, Casimir Perier, Guizot, Thiers, Remusat, B. Constant, Madame de Staël, Thibedeau, Royer-Collard, Kératry, Dupin (deputy), Isambert, General Foy, A. Carrell, Jollivet, Conninin (Timon), Mignet, G. De Beaumont, Tocqueville, Michelet, Quinet, Dulaure, Lammenais, Lerminier, Jouy, Bouchez, Lafayette, Morel Vendé, Madame Dudevant (George Sand), Lamartine, Arago, Celliez, Garnier Pages, Marrast, Regnault, Sarrans, Launnay, Jung, P. Leroux, St. Albin, Duclerc, Chateaubriand, Cabet, Guichard, Alletz, Stael-Holstein, Michels, Carné, Billiard, Troplong, Delaroche, Cordier, Matter, the writers in the *Dictionnaire Politique*, the *Revue Indépendante*, and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Among the newspapers published in Paris and the provinces, it would be difficult to point out any that are hostile to the present law of succession—a fact, which of itself shows the general feeling in its favour among the French people. It may thus, in the words of M. Barante, be said “to have received the best and most infallible of all sanctions, that of uni-

versal assent ;" while, in regard to other nations, may we not in those of St. Albin, say of the French Civil Code, as of the Tricolor, under which it was inaugurated, "that it will make the tour of the universe," and annihilate the feudal institutions of entail and primogeniture which yet infest Britain and some other countries? If the memorable prophetic words of Lamartine, spoken as Minister of Foreign Affairs, have received so striking a confirmation in the course of one short month, by the spectacle of all the German despotisms having been shaken to their centre, what ulterior effects may not be confidently anticipated? "If such things have been done in the green tree, what will not be done in the dry?" "*Jam novus nascitur ordo.*" A new era dawns upon Europe, and its oppressed or misgoverned people. "*C'est trop tard,*" are words which the British aristocracy should remember and ponder over.

THE TRANSLATOR.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE INSTITUTIONS DESTINED TO PERPETUATE THE ESTATES OF THE ARISTOCRACY, ON THE COMPOSITION OF SOCIETY.

THERE exist betwixt the different parts of which society is made up, relations so intimate and direct, that in the chapters destined to treat of the influence which the privileges of property exercise on each of them, it is almost impossible to separate clearly the considerations which severally attach to them. How, for example, can we speak of the effects of the distribution of wealth on the amount of the population, without recalling some of the effects of that same distribution on industry? How can we treat of industry, without entering upon the moral causes the influence of which it feels so strongly? Thus do I aim less at

introducing strict order into the views which I am about to present, than to expose them with all necessary extension and clearness.

Let us begin, by examining the influence of a factitious inequality in the matter of riches, on the composition of society ; that is to say, on the classification which it establishes.

We have seen, in the preceding chapter, how, in adjudging to the privileged minority the totality, or only a portion of the social patrimony, the institutions of the nobility increase the power of the tendencies favourable to an inequality of fortunes ; the more these institutions narrow the number of the rich, the more they augment that of the poor ; and thence come the consequences which will enable us, in our examination, to appreciate the connexion subsisting betwixt proprietors and the rest of the community.

In every country, whoever possesses neither lands, capital, nor other means of existence than his manual labour, necessarily lives by the hire which he receives from the rich. Thus, on the one side, there is a tender of services, and, on the other, an acceptation of them at a rate constantly regulated by the general supply and demand. If more day-labourers present themselves than the rich have occasion for, they only who ask least are employed ; if there be fewer, the wages rise ; but in every case, the unpropertied labourers being under the absolute necessity of working, while the rich have only an interest to furnish them with work, such a disparity in the situations of the contracting parties always throws into the balance a weight unfavourable to the starving operative.

Amongst the causes, whose influence is felt, in fixing

the rate of wages, there is none more active than the relation of the numbers of the two classes. Suppose, for example, that the same individual possesses at once, the lands and manufactories, in a word, all the productive means, of a country ; on him solely would depend the lot of the whole population. It is to him that they would apply to obtain work ; and as, unless in exceptional cases, he would be inclined to give the lowest wages possible, it is evident that, compelled by the necessity of bending to the law which he might choose to impose, they would see themselves reduced to wages barely necessary for preserving themselves alive.

Suppose that the same productive funds fall into the hands of several, the people would be great gainers by the fact. For, independently of the advantages of having a choice of masters, wages would rise through the competition of employers ; and the number of the latter becoming greater, the rewards of labour would increase in the same proportion.

Such are the consequences of the relations of numbers, which keep the distribution of wealth more or less unequal among the different portions of the community. To the material effects of competition, are still joined the moral circumstances, whose influence extends and fortifies them. Are some individuals in the enjoyment of an exclusive opulence ? they display little ardour in its increase ; and, content with a prosperous condition, they hold out little encouragement to an industry of which they alone possess the elements. Are the masters, on the contrary, less rich and more numerous ? the moderateness of their fortunes awakens the desire of increasing them ; industry becomes brisk ; the hope of gain causes higher wages to be given to the working

classes, whose labour becoming a subject of competition, a rise of wages soon places them in an easy and happy position.

We therefore see, that from the concentration, more or less marked, of fortunes, result both the composition of the social body, and the degree of comfort which the masses enjoy. A few rich, and many poor, behold the fruit of privilege. All that is heaped on the small number being taken from the masses, tends to retain them under the yoke of misery and ignorance ; and, as we will shew in the sequel, raises up powerful obstacles to their advancement in well-being and prosperity.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRIVILEGES OF PROPERTY ON THE AMOUNT OF THE POPULATION.

THAT a distribution of wealth, more or less unequal, has an influence on the amount of the population, is a truth that no enlightened publicist has ever called in question.

“Suppose,” says Storch, “that the industry of a country furnishes the means of subsistence for twenty millions of inhabitants : if fortunes are there too unequally divided, a small number will consume an amount of produce which would suffice for nourishing a multitude, and consequently, the population will stop short at twelve millions, in place of rising to twenty, as it would do if wealth were better distributed.”

Such is actually the consequence of a too unequal division of wealth. Whatever may be the state of the

arts, industry, or the productive powers of society, it being impossible to deprive the rich of the right of sacrificing in idle pleasures, the incomes capable of furnishing the means of subsistence to numerous families, to prevent them from preserving in gardens, walks, and parks, lands fit for cultivation—from keeping packs of hounds, horses, racing establishments, and supporting a great retinue of useless and lazy menials—in a word, from absorbing in superfluities, in the enjoyment of luxury and caprice, a part of their wealth,—the population remains depressed in the exact ratio that the institutions advantage the minority.

There exists in Hungary a domain, which the princes of the house of Esterhazy have devoted to the pleasures of the chase. A lake of great extent preserves the waterfowl; thick forests furnish shelter for deer and wild boars; and a vast plain, left uncultivated, is set apart for pheasants and partridges. “Ah, were I the owner of that regal residence,” said the Prince de Ligne, “soon would there rise up on the banks of the lake a handsome village; the plain would soon be covered with farms and hamlets; and with what delight would I not listen to the joyous hum of the numerous inhabitants whom the place would nourish!”

Here is a striking picture of the consequences of overgrown opulence: to the pleasures of one are sacrificed the means of existence and the happiness of many thousand individuals. If there were some hundred Princes de Esterhazy in Austria, never assuredly would have risen up in its provinces that dense population, whose arms now fertilize and defend them.

It is useless to dwell long on a point so easy to form an opinion upon. Two causes determine the multipli-

cation of a people : the one is the amount of the means of subsistence, the other is the use that is made of them. But, as inordinate fortunes allow the keeping in idleness of numbers capable of labour, of withdrawing vast portions of the soil from the raising of corn, or giving up their fruits to be devoured by animals kept for pleasure, it follows, that wherever wealth is divided amongst a few individuals, the population will remain less numerous than it would otherwise be.

To this evil, the progress of the manufacturing arts furnishes a powerful corrective ; and, as Malthus observes, without them Europe would be depopulated. In fact, before the seigneurs of the middle ages found the means of exchanging, for articles of luxury or convenience, the produce of their domains, they bestowed no care on the cultivation or improvement of them. Strangers to other enjoyments than those of the chase, all their expenditure had reference to that pastime ; and herds of deer, and wild boars, to which they abandoned vast tracks of ground, were permitted to destroy the crops. Such was the sort of luxury suited to that period ; the magnificence of a baron was estimated as much by the extent of the land which he left in a state of nature, as by the number of his guards and valets. Thus, William the Conqueror, on taking possession of the crown of England, did not hesitate to raze villages which covered thirty square miles of Hampshire, in order to turn them into a royal forest.

Tastes more favourable to the increase of the population were awakened, as soon as the Venetian caravans offered at the gates of the feudal mansions the refined products of oriental industry, and as artisans, assembled in the precincts of towns, came to prepare at home articles of

utility or show. Prompted by an appetite for these new means of enjoyment, and finally able to exchange for them a superfluity long valueless, the great sought to draw from their estates the greatest advantage possible : lands doomed to sterility were restored to cultivation ; and the mass of subsistence gradually increasing, the population rose to the level of the resources created by the change which had taken place in the tastes and habits of its masters.

But if the development of the industrial arts, in offering to great proprietors the means of varying their enjoyments, widens the field of labour and population, it still does not entirely destroy the evils of a too great concentration of fortunes. Whatever skill the laborious classes may display in the exercise of their industrial faculties, however liberal may be the rewards for an industry carried to its last perfection, excessive opulence still preserves its privative influence ; and the power which it leaves to the small number of absorbing in personal enjoyments a considerable share of the products, continues to impress on consumption a direction unfavourable to the increase of the inferior classes.

“Thirty or forty proprietors,” says Malthus, “with incomes from 1,000*l.* to 5,000*l.* produced a much greater demand for wheaten bread, butcher meat, and manufactured articles, than a single proprietor with 100,000*l.* of income.” And he afterwards adds, “It has always been seen, in point of fact, that the excessive wealth of a small number is not so valuable in regard to real demand, as the more moderate wealth of a great number.”

In fact, whilst men, whose fortunes exceed in too great a degree the circle of their real wants, always

expend a great part of them in immaterial enjoyments, on objects of show, of ostentation, and curiosity, proprietors with less wealth, not having it in their power to devote so much to the satisfaction of factitious wants, only purchase and consume articles of immediate necessity. In place of unproductive persons, or of those whose labour only creates things of the merest futility, those whom they of moderate fortunes employ are workmen, whose fructifying labour, reproducing under the forms which contain in some measure the elements of life, the equivalent of their consumption, calls other men into existence. Without doubt, there is no state of things where the amount of subsistence does not form the limit of population; but the more the expenditure of private incomes tends to direct the powers of production towards the creation of articles really essential for the support of human life, the farther is this limit extended and thrust back;—for, in this case, the abundance of produce within the reach of the multitude encourages them to multiply; and this increase even becoming the stimulus of agricultural production, there are found a constant action and reaction of the population on the labour that nourishes it, and of that labour on the progress of population.

The direction given to the different branches of industry by the modes of consumption is not a thing of small importance. The more wealth there is devoted to the arts of luxury, the less remains to vivify the useful arts; and too often the prosperity of the first leaves in a deplorable state of stagnation both agriculture and manufactures, whose advancement is of the most service to the increase of the population.

“In Epirüs,” says Small Hughes, “all articles of

convenience or general utility, and all those that relate to the sciences, are fabricated in the most inferior manner; whilst embroidered cloths, articles of filagree, ornaments of gold or silver for pistols, guns, daggers, and pipes, display great skill and labour."

It is the same in the states of the East; we see under the silken tents of a Khan, or a Pacha, superb carpets and cashmeres, glittering arms, trinkets curiously worked, but none of the arts necessary for the well-being of an oppressed population are encouraged. Such was also, for a long time, the revolting contrast which the countries of western Europe presented, and which still exists in the provinces of Russia and Poland. There, nothing is wanting to the luxury of the nobility—sumptuous palaces, magnificent clothes, elegant furniture—everything that can flatter vanity, and satisfy the most fastidious taste; but the peasants go barefooted, the fields are mostly in a state of nature, and the badness of the farming leaves the multitude in ignorance and misery. And, nevertheless, what a blessing for humanity if a better distribution of wealth were to favour the amelioration of those branches of industry the most beneficial to the greater number! Some families would renounce a useless and ruinous splendour, but a general comfort would banish suffering, give a spur to industry, and permit society to raise itself to a higher state of civilization and wealth.

All that has now been said must not be set down as vain theory. Europe saw its prosperity and civilization increase in proportion as the middle classes became more numerous and wealthy. And why? Because the dissemination of wealth, or rather the multiplication of moderate fortunes, in giving to consumption a more

just and substantial direction, caused those arts to flourish whose advancement most powerfully contributed to the general well-being, so that there was a simultaneous increase of wealth, happiness, industry, and population.

I have thus, as I believe, formed a correct estimate of the nature of the obstacles which the artificial inequalities of wealth oppose to the increase of the people. The whole is reduced to the following propositions:—From different degrees of individual opulence spring habits, tastes, fashions, and usages, diversely favourable to the progress of industry and population. If there be an equilibrium in fortunes, the manners are simple; and, industry applied principally to the production of articles necessary for human subsistence, the population is numerous and comfortable. On the contrary, do a small number of individuals possess immense incomes? they consume unproductively, or, at least, in enjoyments of pure pleasure, the sums capable of being transformed into means of subsistence; and the population does not rise to the level at which the state of its arts, its trade, and the resources of its soil, would lead us to fix it.

The above considerations will be more clearly elucidated in the examination we are about to make of the influence which the concentration of wealth has on the industrial and moral state of nations.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRIVILEGES OF PROPERTY
ON THE PROGRESS OF INDUSTRY AND WEALTH.

IF the inequality which the privileges of property introduce has the effect of keeping the population under its natural level, these same privileges compress the springs of industry, on the one hand, by cramping the accumulation and circulation of capital, and on the other, by fostering an unproductive consumption ; and become, consequently, unfavourable to the augmentation of wealth, and the well-being of the people.

Let us, first of all, see the utility of capitals as the agents of the production of wealth, and we shall clearly perceive the tendency in favour of an aristocracy, of institutions designed for concentrating property, and rendering it stationary.

We know that men, excited by the desire of ameliorating their condition, naturally seek every means of increasing their well-being. Does a new invention, or a speedier process of production, present advantages? they appropriate it. Do improved modes of cultivation or fabrication increase to their advantage the proportion betwixt the cost and the profits of labour? they adopt them; and the more skill they exert in the use of their powers of production, the faster their industry and wealth increase. But if industry is the result of the human faculties, it has not the less need of material means; and it is in proportion to the extent and the circulation of the national capital that it flourishes and

prosper. In fact, labour does not obtain its reward immediately; we do not reap until after we have sown; every enterprise demands advances; and just as an individual is constrained to regulate his operations by the resources at his command, nations advance in the career of arts and commerce only in so far as, circumstances inducing the wealthier classes to withhold from their ordinary consumption sums destined to a reproductive employment, capitals become more abundant, and are applied with facility to the changing requirements of a progressive industry.

Of all the social organizations, the most defective is that in which privilege distributes private fortunes in too unequal a manner. In that case, the population finds itself divided into two classes; the one too poor to economize, and too ignorant to join to the spirit of industry the knowledge that turns it to account; the other too rich to seek in labour an increase of fortune. There is in the one a want of power, in the other a want of inclination; and industry, deprived of the means of expansion, remains in a deplorable state of stagnation.

And what inducements can lead men possessed of all the enjoyments which fortune and property confer, to commit them to the hazardous chances of trade and speculation? What incentive can they have to forego the sweets of repose, and renounce those habits of luxury and display which their rank makes it a sort of duty for them to indulge in? For such men there is a complete disproportion between the inconveniences and the benefits of exertion; for men seek after wealth less on its own account than for the distinction which it procures; and in respect of the latter, birth leaves

the rich nothing to derive. In the republics of Italy, as well as in the provinces of Holland, powerful families were seen to persevere in the trades in which their fortunes were made ; but such a spirit was never manifested in those castes among whom hereditary wealth was the fruit of privilege. In the monarchies of Europe, industry has no more mortal enemy, than the disgrace attached by bodies of nobles to all lucrative occupations. Transforming into positive laws the prejudices dictated by the pride of privilege, not only do these bodies visit with the penalty of loss of caste such of their members as betake themselves to commerce, but, jealous of the wealth amassed by the middle classes, their efforts almost constantly tend to disparage it, or to dry up the sources from which it is derived.

Hitherto I have only exposed the causes which render the excessive wealth of the small number little profitable to the efforts of industry ; but there are in the privileges of property tendencies which actually condemn to sloth those who enjoy them. If an ordinary proprietor desire to labour with the view of increasing his fortune, he has only to realise his means, and all the roads to opulence are open to him. If a privileged person, rising superior to the prejudices of his caste, desire to engage in some commercial or manufacturing enterprise, the impossibility of alienating a patrimony entailed on his descendants puts a stop to, or turns aside, the course of his projects. The latter has no other means of realising the funds for which he has occasion, than by savings made from his income ; he must submit to long privations, with the view to a future augmentation of his wealth ; he requires to begin by depriving himself of the enjoyments which fortune

places within his reach ; and if he shall form the resolution of doing this, he has no assurance, by the time he shall have been able to effect his object, that a change of circumstances will not have intervened to deprive him of the wished-for opportunity. We thus perceive that, under the dominion of laws so opposed to the exercise of the industrial faculties, the nobility, even supposing it exempt from prejudices, would remain inactive, and contribute nothing towards the accumulation of the reproductive capital of a country. Unfortunately, the institutions which tie up its hands, militate more fatally still against the productive powers of the community.

In fact, in proportion as society flourishes and develops itself, the industry of its members frequently changes its forms, and extends itself more rapidly according as capital circulates with more freedom. Are new outlets presented to trade ? do more refined wants call for a new use of the powers of production ? do high profits in some branch of industry announce that a means of well-being is not sufficiently worked out ? Men can avail themselves of these circumstances only in proportion to the extent of the advances in their power to make ; and without that assistance which the mutability of property affords, it would be almost impossible to take advantage of circumstances eminently favourable to the increase of the national resources. In the first place, the savings may prove insufficient ; in the second, they may be found in the hands of indolent men, or others little disposed to embark in hazardous speculations ; but if no privileges interdict proprietors from disposing of their estates, here is what will follow. Induced by the hope of

considerable profits, the boldest or most skilful will raise the funds which they require; and those who do not wish to speculate, will not hesitate to purchase houses or lands which are suited to them; capital will speedily flow into the hands of those who are most capable of turning it to account, and will receive the application the most advantageous both to individuals and to society.

Such are the effects of a free mutation of private properties. It permits men to raise from them the funds necessary for the amelioration of the works which circumstances render the most profitable; and if the funds disengaged from certain kinds of property lower the selling price of them for a time, in a short time the wealth which they afford the means of extracting from more lucrative sources collecting to the advantage of the social body, expands and enhances its means of well-being and advancement.

Suppose, on the contrary, that the lands and other productive funds of a nation are subjected to the *regime* of Entails, all these advantages disappear; in vain do fields, still in a virgin state, promise abundant harvests; in vain does the progress of the manufacturing arts reveal new means of production; in vain does commerce invite to multiply the articles, whose interchange would augment its wealth; not being able to mobilize or put in circulation the capitals engaged in agriculture, or to expend on agriculture the savings of trustees, it only makes slow advances in the field of production, and it is with extreme difficulty that it succeeds in reaping the benefits attached to a change in the pursuits of industry.

Thus does the fixity of property, the sad effect of

aristocratical privileges, prevent the funds productive of wealth from bending to the necessities of an industry essentially variable and progressive. In proportion to the number of properties withdrawn from circulation, and the restrictions imposed on the use of the means of opulence and well-being, are the obstacles to the development of the industrial faculties of nations.

Numerous facts are at hand to support our view of the evils resulting from aristocratical privileges. However various may be the causes which influence the economical state of societies, so great nevertheless is the action of the privileges of property, that the progress of European nations has generally been subordinated to the degree of pressure which these privileges exercised. Thus it was in the free towns of Italy and Germany, where the laws left to every one full liberty to sell and acquire, that trade first sprang up, and where the accumulation of wealth rescued the human mind from the deplorable torpor in which the fall of the Roman Empire had sunk it : later still, Holland and England, countries in which Entails, confined within certain limits, did not consecrate the inalienability of property, displayed an industrial energy, and rose to the highest pitch of opulence. We know with what slowness Spain, Portugal, Naples, and certain parts of France and Germany, where the institutions of nobility rendered stationary almost the whole landed property, followed that glorious example.

It is the same with Russia and Poland. If these immense countries remain steeped in ignorance and wretchedness, it is on the laws which reserve to the nobility the exclusive property of the soil, that the blame must be laid ; the people, in a state of serfage,

and too indigent to retrench their ordinary consumption, cannot amass capital ; the nobility, too proud to engage in trade, consume all their incomes ; thence come the stagnation of an industry, deprived of all means of improvement, as well as the non-existence of a middle class, whose intelligent activity, dissipating the gloom of Slavonic barbarism, would raise the edifice of a brilliant and progressive civilization.

Even at the present day, how strong are the obstacles which the proprietary privileges of the nobility present to the amelioration of the social destinies of Russia ! How rapidly would not the resources of that country increase, if the wealth accumulated by its traders, and the capital which they might borrow from foreigners, were applied to the improvement of the soil ! But the laws oppose this. An indolent and prodigal nobility holds the lands which it has neither the will nor the means to cultivate ; so that the species of industry the most necessary to a vast and thinly peopled empire does not prosper in proportion to the abundance of the agents of production, and to the aid afforded by the experience and example of more civilized nations. Thus it is not merely against the poverty of the soil, and the severity of the climate, that the population of Russia has to contend, but even more against the heavy pressure of institutions antagonistic to the proper use of the elements of prosperity.

It is true, that an ukase of Alexander authorized the peasants of the crown and the emancipated serfs to acquire lands, to which no slaves were attached. This edict is praiseworthy, in as far as it presents a basis for rearing a middle class ; and, in proportion as the free population increases, the empire will derive important

advantages from it. We cannot say as much of the measures adopted for opening new means of employment for the savings of the commercial class ; the idea of shutting out foreign merchandise by a tariff of duties so high as to be virtually prohibitive, in order to encourage national manufactures, is false and vicious. By means of such a law a nation is forced to create at a great expense, what it could purchase cheaper abroad with the products of its own industry ; and capitals are withdrawn from sources where they would yield most profit : it is to agriculture that the state of the country calls for their application, it is in that direction they ought to flow. But such is the unhappy effect of unjust laws, that in order to correct the abuses which they give birth to, men have recourse to other abuses, and thus estrange themselves more and more from the paths which conduct most rapidly to opulence and civilization.

It now remains for us to consider a point of no less importance, namely, the influence which is exercised on the industrial condition of nations by the character, more or less unproductive, of their consumption. Already, in the preceding chapters, we have made it apparent, that too great an inequality in the partition of fortunes, by exciting the luxury of the smaller number, presents an obstacle to the increase of the population, by consigning to an unproductive consumption the incomes capable of paying for useful labour ; and necessarily restricts the industrial advantages which a different state of things would give rise to in the bosom of the community.

To appreciate fully this effect, let us observe, that if all the products of industry are necessarily destined to

consumption, this consumption may take place in ways and manners exceedingly different. Lay out any sum whatever, either in the purchase of raw materials, which you work into manufactures, or in paying the productive services of an artisan, that sum will be expended reproductively, because, in return for the money sunk, you will obtain corn or other articles of an equal or superior value. Lay it out, on the contrary, in satisfying domestic wants, no equivalent comes to replace the destruction which has ensued ; and your consumption is unproductive. The same distinction holds good betwixt the individuals who compose the body of a nation. The artisan requires food, fuel, clothing, and necessaries of every sort ; like the rich, in proportion as he makes use of them, he destroys their value ; but as, at the same time, the fruits of his labour acquire a value at least equivalent, his consumption, far from diminishing the amount of existing capital, produces for the most part a notable augmentation of it. It is not the same with an unoccupied man ; all that he expends is lost to society, and his unfructifying consumption absorbs a portion of the general annual income.

It is clear that if, through the effect of the distribution of wealth, all men were obliged to eke out by their labour an insufficient income, consumption would only be in some measure the exchange of products created against others preparing ; and that industry, carried to the highest pitch of imaginable activity, would multiply more and more the articles necessary for the comfort of human life.

The above is a supposititious state of society, that will certainly never be realised. So long as there are

proprietors, there will be unoccupied persons found among them ; and even of those who engage in industry, there will always be a number who expend, unproductively, a portion of the returns of their lands and capitals. Still, as the moderate extent of fortunes tends to turn their owners from a ruinous inactivity, it follows, that the less inequality there is in the repartition of the annual returns, the less wealth will be devoted to an unproductive consumption.

The modes of consumption do not, however, produce in every case effects equally pernicious ; and, in this respect, the degree of opulence makes a great difference betwixt the results of individual expenditure. A small proprietor scarcely does more than deprive society of his own personal labour : not being in a situation to procure those enjoyments that lie far out of the circle of the real wants of life, the fabrication of the articles which he uses, nourishes a useful industry, and his income at least pays for the services of the laborious classes. The man of colossal fortune, on the contrary, if he contribute also to the support of useful labourers, lavishes means of existence on a crowd of beings either entirely useless, or whose sterile talents at most serve only to amuse his leisure ; an unproductive consumer, he reduces to the same condition a number of persons capable of producing ; in place of artisans and labourers, he salaries lacqueys, mistresses, and singers ; and funds, whose employment would vivify the arts, with whose advancement is bound up the happiness of a people, go to encourage sloth, or to promote works whose only object is the gratification of some frivolous and often vicious propensity.

This is not all. The direction that is impressed on

the means of production by the luxury of the higher classes is the least advantageous ; the superfluities destined for the rich absorb the forces which, if better employed, would increase the general well-being ; and it is besides a certain truth, that the industry which produces them is of all others the worst remunerated, and the least favourable to the happiness of the classes that live by it. The reason of this is plain. Whilst there exists a constant and certain demand for articles necessary for human life, those of luxury are exposed to all the vicissitudes of fashion and circumstances ; sometimes a change in the fashion depreciates their value, at other times a war, or some event which makes money scarce, prevents their sale ; the consequence to the producers is a fall in prices, or a cessation of demand. " Thus has it been noticed," remarks M. Say, " that the directors of establishments which produce superfluities make the smallest profits, and that their workmen receive the lowest wages. In Normandy and Flanders the finest laces are prepared by persons exceedingly miserable ; and the workmen of Lyons, who fabricate the brocades, are clad in rags."

" What would happen," says Storch, " if the rich made a better use of their incomes, and employed them reproductively ? — There would be produced fewer articles of luxury, and more of those of the first necessity. The number of jewellers, gilders, dressmakers, embroiderers, and lacemakers, would diminish ; a crowd of lacqueys, hairdressers, parasites, singers and players, would betake themselves to useful trades ; a number of horses kept for pleasure would be employed in agriculture or the transport of goods ; large tracts of country, reserved for parks and pleasure-grounds, would be

turned into arable land ; in a word, capital and industry would be augmented, and ease would become general."

Adam Smith also has pointed out with his usual sagacity the pernicious effects of an unproductive consumption. " In mercantile and manufacturing towns," says he, " where the inferior ranks of the people are chiefly maintained by the employment of capital, they are in general industrious, sober, and thriving, as in many English and in most Dutch towns. In those towns which are principally supported by the constant or occasional residence of a court, and in which the inferior ranks of the people are chiefly maintained by the spending of revenue, they are in general idle, dissolute, and poor." After citing as examples the inhabitants of Rome, Versailles, Compeigne, and Fontainebleau, Madrid, and Vienna, and those towns in France which were the seats of the old Parliaments, with the exception of Rouen and Bordeaux, which owe to commerce the advantages of their situation, the same author remarks, that there is reason to believe that the sloth of the classes supported by the unproductive rich corrupts the laborious part of the population. " There was little trade or industry in Edinburgh before the Union.—When the Scotch Parliament was no longer to be assembled in it, when it ceased to be the necessary residence of the principal nobility and gentry of Scotland, it became a city of some trade and industry. It still continues, however, to be the residence of the principal courts of Justice in Scotland, of the boards of Customs, Excise, &c. A considerable revenue, therefore, still continues to be spent in it. In trade and industry it is much inferior to Glasgow, of which the

inhabitants are chiefly maintained by the employment of capital. The inhabitants of a large village, it has been sometimes observed, after having made considerable progress in manufactures, have become idle and poor in consequence of a great lord having taking up his residence in their neighbourhood."

Müller, in his *History of Switzerland*, makes the same observation in regard to the town of Constance. The holding of the council having transformed Constance into a town of luxury, the manufacturers emigrated to St. Gall ; and from that period the latter dates its prosperity.

So great a boast has been made of the advantages attached to the residence of great proprietors on their estates, that the facts above announced will scarcely obtain credence ; and still nothing can be more true. The establishment of a vast focus of consumption, if it in some respects favours the local production, in others is often much more hurtful to it. On the one hand, the example of the rich, and especially that of their servants, introduces, for the most part, a taste for luxury and habits of idleness. On the other, the works which they cause to be executed, in withdrawing the working people from their habitual occupations, and raising the price of manual labour, discourage the directors of industrial enterprises, and induce them to transport their industry elsewhere. What happens then ? This : that in exchange for a stable and permanent existence, the people have only precarious and uncertain resources. Men who, lured by the offer of higher wages, have deserted their ordinary employments to raise terraces or dig basons in the park of a great proprietor, find themselves, when some months are over, without bread or

employment: forced into a state of idleness, they acquire its deplorable habits; and to a moral and orderly course of life succeed dissoluteness and misery.

There is, as we see, in the consequences of the improvidence of the poor, and the uncertainty of wages paid by the rich, something analogous to what we observed in regard to those communities whose industry supplies the caprices and the luxury of the wealthy class. Perhaps longer details would be necessary to bring out all the inconveniences resulting from an undue inequality of fortunes; but I believe that I have said enough to leave scarce a doubt on the subject.

CHAPTER VII.

ON ARISTOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN THEIR CONNEXION WITH MANNERS.

HAVING seen how, in adjudging to a small number the property, the honours, the distinctions, in a word, all the advantages of society, aristocratical privileges tend to divide the population into two classes, — the one poor, and the other rich,—let us now weigh the moral consequences of such an order of things.

We shall begin by noticing the influence which is exercised over the ideas, sentiments, and conduct of the inferior classes by the obstacles opposed to their industry and comfort; and then proceed to examine the manners natural to the classes whose opulence is the fruit of privilege.

As agent and object of his own labours, man displays, according to time and circumstance, qualities diversely

promotive of his happiness. Sometimes, a being intelligent and laborious, he lives in abundance and comfort; at other times, indolent and rude, he vegetates in ignorance and misery: and it is not merely amongst nations whose population, far scattered, are living under unfavourable circumstances of soil and climate, that so revolting a contrast afflicts the sight. Only a few years back, to pass from Saxony into Bohemia, from Holland into Westphalia, from Switzerland into Savoy or Franche Comté, was, as the traveller Riesbeck observes, to quit a land of fertility and cultivation, for another which sloth had left nearly in a state of nature. A number of nations may even at the present day give occasion to the same reflections: subjected to institutions more or less favourable to the development of their physical and moral faculties, they advance with unequal speed in the career of arts and industry:—in every case there is a dominant cause at work;—the extent of the recompence assured to individual exertions accelerates or retards their progress; and whilst wealth is the appanage of all the countries in which man is able to raise himself by his labour to a more honourable position, indigence or sloth prevails in those whose spoliatory institutions take from him the hope of eventually bettering his condition. "

In Ireland, in the time of Arthur Young, it was remarked that three labourers scarcely executed in a day the task easily performed by one Englishman,—and, what is singular, these same Irish have an excellent character as workmen in Britain. It may be said that the passage of St. George's Channel gives them at once new powers; and such is actually the effect produced on them by the difference of wages. Idle and

dissipated in their own country, where the price of their labour scarcely suffices for the most pressing wants of existence, they become active and indefatigable in England, where, owing to the more favourable circumstances of the country, the operative is better paid, and may even lay up a small provision for old age.

"In Germany," says Shultz, in his "Letters on Silesia and Poland," "the peasants labour with alacrity, and the air resounds with their songs. In Galicia, they are spectres, who, oppressed with hunger, painfully drag themselves along. Among them are heard no other sounds than those of sorrow ;—cries, yells, and sobs respond to the blows of the whip of the overseer, who goads the lazy peasant to his work. This peasant has nothing he can call his own : as a serf, he holds in fief his field, his horses, and the hut he lives in : his soul is without energy, and the scourge is his only stimulus to exertion."

To this dismal picture he adds a list of the vices which dependence and misery have made the characteristics of the Polish bondman:—drunkenness, knavery, a propensity to steal and revolt, are of the number ; and he proceeds to show the industrial and moral superiority of the German colonists dispersed over the same provinces.

Such, in fact, must be the influence of the inequality of the remuneration assigned to labour. Man is not a machine, that blindly exerts its powers : if hunger or violence force him to wield the axe or spade, it is the attraction of enjoyments, the hope of bettering his situation, which alone imparts to his arm energy and dexterity. Let the laws once crush or weaken this

mainspring of his strength, let them leave him no other prospect than that of hopeless indigence, he will work without vigour, industry, intelligence, or honesty.

Ascend from the slave to the citizen of a free state :—reckon the different degrees of industry, of wealth, and moral distinction ; and you will find them constantly subordinated to the chances of well-being and elevation left to the individual. If the slave be at once the weakest, the most sluggish, and the most degraded of human beings, the mere operative, who grovels under the chain of poverty, scarcely displays more worth or activity. Disinherited of those blessings which the earth supplies, he does nothing to increase them, and falls into an incurable apathy, retaining all the sentiments, the sloth, and the habits of servitude. But change the circumstances that discourage him ; let him be able finally, by dint of skill and industry, to escape from his indigence ; the desire of improving his condition will shew itself : he will seek to outstrip his equals ; he will throw himself with ardour into all the paths open to his industry ; and under his hands, become more active and vigorous, will soon flourish the arts, commerce, and all the elements of human felicity.

Notwithstanding all this, who will believe it ? Men have actually made an apology for misery :—certain writers have pretended, that without the spur of hunger man would not labour ; and that, far from being advantageous to society, a rise of wages breeds sloth and idleness.—Unjust and desolating doctrine ! The ancients transmitted it to us ; and it is one entirely worthy of their times of slavery. Among them, the enslaved labourer expended in despair the sweat

of his brow for a master whom he detested ;—the free-man would have thought himself debased by participating in labours which were assigned to a degraded race. But what facts can be brought to support such a doctrine in countries freed from the scourge of servitude? Do we not see the richest people animated with an ever-increasing desire of labour? Is it not in the north of France, the Low Countries, in England and Switzerland, that are found the populations at once the best off, and the most laborious, in Europe? Spain, the Roman States, and Naples, — countries where misery is the sad consequence of institutions,—are they not, as if in the way of retributive justice, swarming with beggars, who refuse to work, because their labour would barely afford them a subsistence?

Let us not deceive ourselves as to what passes in the mind of the poor artizan ;—let not the apparent mediocrity of the reward attached to the annoyances and fatigues which he endures, lead us into a mistake on this point : he judges of his situation in a different manner from what we do. That life, which to us appears so hard and painful, habit renders tolerable to him ;—those wages, which are so trifling in our eyes, he is content with ; and, provided the course of things allows him to participate in the advantages resulting from the increase of the general well-being, he carries into his occupations a cheerfulness favourable to the development and the energy of his industrial faculties. If, as Raynal says, the labour prompted by hunger is as bounded as its cause, the labour supported by the hope of ease is indefatigable ; and we more generally see the operative, employed at piece-work, miscalculate and exceed the limits of his strength, than stop short

at the point where his gains would be sufficient to afford the ordinary means of subsistence.

Unfortunately, sloth and discouragement are not the only effects of institutions that impede the amelioration of the condition of the masses ;—these institutions lower their intelligence, and have the worst effect on their characters and dispositions.

It is a truth, that all conditions of life are not equally conducive to nourish the germs of the benevolent affections and domestic virtues. If an easy condition, by making it possible to subtract from daily consumption the means of providing for the future, accustoms men to control their appetites, to live orderly, and to extend their views beyond the present, extreme poverty, by destroying the possibility of such a sacrifice, weakens the reason, and banishes forethought. To satisfy some caprice, the savage will sell in the morning the bed which he will want at night ;—like him, the unpropertied operative obeys the instincts which prompt him to satisfy his momentary propensities :—coveting the enjoyments within his reach, in proportion as privation excites the desire of them, he abandons himself to drunkenness and debauchery ; and the more he gives way to these excesses as a temporary relief for his ills, the more deaf he becomes to the dictates of reason and prudence.

“Give,” says an English writer, “a guinea to a peasant of one of the three kingdoms, and see the use which each will make of the unexpected gift : the Irishman will squander it in the tavern ; the Englishman, more considerate than he, will lay it out in clothes, or some household article ; the Scotsman alone will know how to make a productive use of it,—he will

buy a pig to be fed out of the refuse of his table, or an implement of labour, or flax which his wife will spin ; in short, something of which time and industry will increase the value."

Such is the result of the inequality of intelligence springing from a more or less prosperous condition. The most miserable people are the most intemperate ; and a want of prudence and forethought always adds to the weight of their misery.

From the same want of providence proceed other consequences not less prejudicial. Although sunk below the level which better economical laws would permit them to reach, the inferior classes unfortunately tend to multiply themselves at a rate proportionate to their ignorance and brutalization. Those sentiments which in the higher ranks combat the desire for marriage and paternity,—the fear of leaving children worse provided for than themselves,—how can poverty-stricken operatives feel their power ?—they, whose sons cannot fall below a condition than which there is none lower,—they, to whom Providence has left no other happiness on earth than the pleasures of the senses ! Thus, it happens that, always too numerous relatively to its resources, this portion of society can never escape from the yoke of misery. "Barbarism and despotism," says Malthus, "do not extinguish the passion which leads to the increase of the population ; but these two scourges co-operate to remove the obstacles to it which reason and prudence impose."

And how many additional causes conspire against the happiness and dignity of the classes disinherited by privilege ! Dispirited by suffering, brutalized by ignorance, and the dependence in which they are held

by too restricted a number of masters, the concentration of fortunes completes their degradation. Deprived of the only species of liberty which operatives enjoy, that of a choice among several masters, it is impossible for them to find at once bread and kind treatment.

For, I ask, what virtue, what moral energy, are to be expected from unfortunate men, whom want condemns to tolerate all the caprices and harshness of him who pays them,—who in all their relations must abdicate their free will,—who, under the penalty of dying of hunger, must conceal the disgust caused by an insult? Slaves in reality, they soon assume their character :—how should they not become malignant, base, grovelling, and insincere?

It may happen that in a situation so debasing they have preserved the affections whose influence represses the malevolent passions; but such is the unhappy situation of the poor man, that neither a sensibility for the pains of others, nor the fear of censure,—those two great checks on mankind,—has any hold upon him. In his heart, hardened by unmerited suffering, pity and compassion for the afflictions of others are extinct; one only sentiment exists there, a hatred of the happiness which he sees them enjoy; and the dread of punishment can alone deter him from evil.

Let it not be believed that, in the absence of moral sensibility, the desire of esteem and the fear of contempt will recall him to a sense of duty. Alas! in dooming him to that scorn which ought only to fall on misconduct, misery liberates him from the restraint of public opinion! virtuous, he is not more respected; vicious, his deviations scarcely add to the weight of the humiliations with which he is loaded! What a wretched

portion of humanity ! Whilst privations, ignorance, and brutality, fostering their animal appetites, invite them to evil, neither the fear of blame nor the influence of the sympathetic affections affords them support against such temptations.

Such are the deplorable consequences of institutions that rob the greater number to the profit of a privileged majority ; the more energy these institutions possess, the less industry, comfort, and morality are there in the working classes. Such institutions, also, equally corrupt the manners and the dispositions of the classes whom they advantage ; and if misery debases the humble, the great do not any more escape from the pernicious impressions made on them by a mode of existence too favourable to luxury, and the pride of dominion.

“ To what cause must we attribute,” says Machiavel, “ the long preservation of the same character in certain families ? To the influence of the opinions which, from his earliest years, a child has heard passed on good and evil. These first impressions are deeply graven on his heart, and become the rule of his actions at the different periods of his life ; thence the inflexible severity of the Manlii, the popular affability of the Publicolæ, and the ambition and pride of the Appii ; could it have otherwise happened, that all the Appii should have displayed the same inclinations, and been actuated by the same passions ? ” Perhaps Machiavel ought to have remarked that, placed hereditarily at the head of political factions, the great Roman families, in adopting the opinions of their party, were necessarily obliged to model their conduct in conformity to them. But, however that may be, there are really

manners peculiar to every private condition; and in every country, those of the privileged classes have their distinctive character :—not that under the axe of the Inquisition, or the sword of despotism, the patrician of Venice, or the Muscovite Boyard, will display the warlike pride of the Polish Magnate ; but there is a corruption, the offspring of luxury and domination, from which there is no escaping, on the part of those who, according to Machiavel, have only to enjoy themselves, because birth has given them all that they can desire.

See what education and impressions the scion of an illustrious house receives. Bred up in the belief of the original distinctions of his race, surrounded by menials anxious to please him, and only meeting in the restricted circle of his equals with that opposition whose inflexibility sharpens the faculties, and breeds a wholesome respect for the rights of others,—how can he fail to imbibe the presumptuous idea of his having a natural superiority over other men? Woe to him who has not frequently recoiled before the free and disinterested will of others,—to him, especially, whose infancy has been passed far from the pains and miseries of human life!—he will never know the tender and benevolent affections; pride and obduracy will be his portion: and what aliment for the vicious passions of a great man is there not found in his relations with inferiors, greedy of the favours he has to bestow? At the age when these passions are strongest, everything facilitates his irregularities: his choice is an honour; advances are even made to him; and, far from softening his haughty spirit, these easily acquired pleasures enervate, deprave, and confirm him in his fatal contempt for

humanity.—Melancholy effects indeed of privilege ! The classes which it separates mutually corrupt each other; and whilst the people crouch at the feet of a few masters, who inspire neither devotedness nor affection, the latter become accustomed to see in their subordinates only the instruments of their pleasure or ambition.

It would be useless to stop to describe all the vices which the pride of opulence engenders. So many writers have spoken of the satiety produced by the abuse of enjoyments,—of the torments attached to the ennui of forming desires whose gratification calls forth no noble efforts of application or intelligence,—they have so vividly painted the order of impressions which conduct a being, fatigued with rational pleasures, to seek for new emotions in the disorder of vice or the turmoil of vanity, that nothing remains to be said on the subject. Besides, facts in abundance come to attest the justness of their observations. They prove, that whenever an aristocracy does not find in the exercise of political domination an aliment for its activity, it falls into that sink of dissoluteness, of which the descendants of the Fabricii and the Scipios furnish an example, as soon as the loss of the Roman liberties condemned them to enjoy in the shade the riches amassed by their ancestors. Let us recall the manners of the courtiers of our kings—the gallantries of the reign of Louis XIV., the unbridled licence of the Regency, the debaucheries and irregularities of the court of Louis XV.,—and we shall see luxury and sloth always producing the same pernicious effects. I would also solicit the attention of my readers to two circumstances, whose influence, though less noticed and

characterized, has not been less felt in the European monarchies ; I mean the influence exercised over the manners of the people by the luxury of the great, and the ante-industrial prejudices which privileges give birth to.

Luxury, says Rousseau, corrupts every one,—the rich who enjoy it, and the poor who covet it. And, in fact, is it not natural that the poor man should attach all his ideas of happiness and perfection to the use of things and the imitation of manners which distinguish the persons whose lot he envies ? Thus it is in every place where the distribution of wealth favours the luxury of the great : the people acquire habits of ostentation, and ideas of what is suitable and becoming in life, as pernicious as they are frivolous. It is to no purpose that reason disavows an external splendour got up at the expense of domestic comfort—the wants of pride and vanity are not less urgent and importunate than those of nature :—people strive to appear not to be without those things to which opinion attaches a value;—in order to procure them, they live in privation, by sacrificing the resources whose judicious employment would have swelled their annual incomes; and as often as nations, prodigal and vain, thus dissipate a part of their means of prosperity, misery and vice come to torment families, whom greater prudence would have rendered easy and happy.

To how many sumptuary laws was not recourse had in past ages, to remedy the mischiefs flowing from luxury and ostentation ! Alas, the evil was beyond their reach. It was in vain that laws were made to proscribe high-pointed shoes, or embroidered cloaks, and to forbid the trade of a goldsmith : equally vain was it to fix the colour and the quality of the clothes to

be worn by persons of different professions; the same extravagances soon reappeared under other forms. And how could the people preserve a taste for what was simple and unostentatious, when the great believed it essential to their dignity to display so much magnificence, that in the conferences of the Field of Gold, the courtiers of Henry VIII., and of Francis I., ruined themselves by their parade? "The French barons," says one of our historians on that occasion, "carried on their shoulders their lands and mills;" and in regard to the English, Hume states, that "the economy of the rest of their lives was insufficient to repair the breaches then made in their fortunes."

We have now to consider the influence of the prejudices natural to privileged castes. The offspring of pride, these prejudices seem the inevitable effects of artificial classification; at least, it is certain that we find traces of them wherever institutions have unequally distributed rights and powers. Thus, in antiquity the freeman confidently believed himself of another nature than the slave; and even the philosopher never carried his speculations so high as to call in question the superiority which he attributed to himself. In ancient Rome, so strong was the power of the prejudices resulting from the division of the people into two castes, that when a law was proposed to permit the patrician and plebeian families to intermarry, the defenders of aristocratic prerogatives declared openly, in the face of the people, that, monstrous as those of animals of different species, such alliances could only produce a mongrel progeny, dissimilar to their progenitors and to the human race. The morality of the Gospel did not preserve Christian nations from the influence of analogous

prejudices. Proud of their domination almost without bounds, the barons of the middle ages looked upon their vassals as beings of an inferior nature ; and their conduct, even their laws, prove that they did not consider it their duty to show them more attention than they bestowed on the animals that stocked their domains. These ideas, it is true, were modified as civilization advanced : by degrees the nobles ceased to believe themselves entitled to sport with the lives of their serfs, or to take a pride in pillaging and cruelly treating them ; but to barbarous and ferocious sentiments succeeded prejudices inimical to the exercise of the arts of industry.

Possessors of estates, of which fiduciary institutions assured them the immutable preservation, the nobles led an unoccupied life, or followed the career of arms. As, in the republics of antiquity, the citizens would have believed themselves disgraced by performing the work assigned to slaves, so the nobles made it a point of honour not to embrace any of the industrial professions, by which the inferior orders enriched themselves. To spend their revenues, or serve their princes, was the only rule which they prescribed to themselves ; and whoever deviated from it, whoever sought in trade an increase of fortune, derogated from his dignity, and was punished by the contempt of his equals, and even by the loss of his prerogatives. If a prejudice so opposed to the amelioration of the sources of public wealth, had not extended its influences beyond the privileged circle, the evil would only have been half of what it was ; but, unfortunately, it is with the maxims and principles of the higher classes as with their modes and usages, they become, in the long run, the types after which the

inferior classes model themselves. As the nobility despised labour, and honoured idleness, men who had made their fortunes in the ranks of the people, hastened to abandon their ignominious vocations. As the nobility recognised differences in the degree of consideration which the several professions merited, the men who were engaged in the least despised, made of them a title of superiority; and in all branches of industry humiliating distinctions were introduced. Thus, under the ancient regime, we find among the different orders into which the industrial class was divided, all the shades and gradations of honour imagined and devised by the privileged caste. As the nobility of the sword took precedence over that of the long robe, the ship-owner demanded it of the trader, the notary of the physician, the painter of the architect, the tailor of the shoemaker;—what do I say?—betwixt all professions existed differences in respectability; and, as if there were not obstacles enough opposed by nature to the prosperity of nations, vanity took care to raise up factitious ones, which turned individuals out of the paths in which their talents promised them the most certain success.

Such prejudices produced the most fatal effects. In giving a false direction to the delicate principle of honour, they too frequently turned it against the general interest, and even the primary object of society. What progress could industry and wealth make amongst nations or classes holding in their hands the productive funds, and the means of increasing them; who saw nothing but disgrace in the exercise of the arts creative of well-being; or where, in order to escape from contempt and raise themselves to consideration, the humbler classes, as Turgot tells of those of Limoges, threw

up their professions as soon as they had made money ? “ At Constance,” says the Baron Riesbeck, “ a nobleman looks with disdain on the citizen who owes his wealth, not to a doubtful genealogy, but to his capacity and industry. This disdain makes a deep impression on the simple citizen, who, in place of augmenting his capital by continuing to work, buys a title, assumes the airs of a nobleman, and then insults his fellow-citizens by displaying a pride still more contemptible than that of the other.”

There are nations whom this species of prejudice has stripped of all industry, and condemned to misery. If Spain beholds her commerce, wealth, and power all at once disappear, let us lay the blame not more on the vices of a monk-ridden government, than on the ancient prejudices sanctioned by the authority of the laws, and the municipal institutions of the kingdom. Could industry subsist in a country where the lineage of a family was tarnished as soon as one of its members betook himself to some trade ; where the laws of Philip II. stamped with infamy a vast number of professions, such as those of the blacksmith, tanner, shoemaker, and tailor ? In vain did the wants of the treasury, in the reign of Philip III., suggest the means of reviving a nation, which had retrograded with a frightful rapidity ; in vain did the Duke of Lerma, wishing to turn to account the very prejudices of the people, offer the rank of knight to every cultivator who might give proofs of his skill : the different distinctions held their ground ; and the encouragement bestowed on agriculture supplied no remedy to the evils resulting from the prejudices that militated against the practice of the mechanical arts.

If in the greater number of monarchies of Europe, the people had to struggle against the obstructions which a contempt of industry opposed to an augmentation of their wealth, such has not been the condition of the states the most distinguished by their commercial activity. In the towns of the Hanseatic league, in the Italian republics before they fell under the sway of the House of Charles V., honours were freely bestowed on merchants and manufacturers. "In Holland," says Adam Smith, "it is unfashionable not to be a man of business, and idleness passes for a mark of incapacity." It is the same in the United States of America; the man who there neglects to increase his fortune by exertion, meets with little respect. These facts are consolatory, in as far as they show us, in prejudices favourable to idleness, a bitter fruit of institutions, and not an evil natural to the whole order of society. We may add, that even in France a great change in this respect has taken place in our manners; and at the present day, many persons no longer hesitate to devote themselves to occupations, which they would have spurned before the Revolution.

I have thus passed in review the numerous evils attached to the existence of privileges, which go to maintain an aristocracy in monarchical states. Population, manners, industry, well-being,—there is no part of the social body which is not grievously injured by laws which sacrifice the interests of the many to the outward splendour of the few,—there is no element in the power and felicity of nations, which the alteration of the actual course of wealth and distinction does not deprive of some chance of development or amelioration.

Perhaps it will be asked how it happens that, under

the dominion of institutions so vicious, the nations of Europe have reaped the benefits of a progressive civilization? It is because the concurrence of various causes is necessary to annihilate the vivifying power of human perfectibility, and to reduce nations to the deplorable stagnation of which those of Asia offer so many examples. How many iniquitous and restrictive institutions have bent and given way before the efforts of the active tendencies of civilization! Contemplate the picture of the middle ages :—pressed down under the yoke of the most odious servitude, the people broke it, and opened a route for themselves, although dragging after them the remnants of the chain which ignorance and the pride of the nobility had forged for them :—roused by the desire of improving their condition, individuals displayed an energy that rose superior to the cruel errors of legislation; and their efforts pushed the whole of society forward in a career of which time more and more softened the asperities. Thus do nations prosper without the rapidity of their advance attesting an organization exclusive of all unjust and pernicious principles. And, in fact, what social system is exempt from them? The evil which is hid from our eyes, our grandchildren, enriched with the lights of experience, will discover under that external envelope whose brilliance now perhaps dazzles and misleads us.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE PRIVILEGES OF PROPERTY CONSIDERED IN
CONNEXION WITH THE PROSPERITY OF THE FAMILIES
WHO ENJOY THEM.

HAVING seen how costly is the maintenance of a territorial aristocracy, let us try to estimate the value of the advantages which the spoliation of the greater number procures for the privileged minority.

It usually happens that bad institutions fall short of their object, and that the fruits of injustice quickly decay ; let us therefore see if unjust prerogatives have actually contributed to the well-being and prosperity of noble families.

This question has already been treated by a great writer. "All the aristocracies," says Sismondi, "that have maintained themselves in the world, in Greece, Rome, Florence, Venice, and in the Italian republics, have been ruled by the law of an equal division among all the children of a family. Colossal fortunes have been maintained in them for several centuries, even when they are engaged in trade, such as those of the Strozzi and Medici at Florence, and the Fuggers at Augsburg ; we rarely saw in these families a great number of brothers, and still they did not for all that become sooner extinct.

"All the bodies of nobility, which we have seen reduced to a degrading state of poverty in the monarchies or principalities of Spain, Italy, Germany, and ancient France, lived under the *regime* of majorats

and entails. We have always seen each father have a great number of sons, of whom all the younger were condemned to idleness and poverty. Their numbers did not prevent noble families from becoming extinct : it was even a common saying as to them, that a father who has eight children has rarely grandchildren ; but if it at times happened that the younger sons married, they gave birth to new families who lived in misery, and who thus destroyed the respect sought to be attached to historic names."

Such are the facts ; and certainly their uniformity in different countries authorizes us to consider them as the result of what commonly follows from the laws which confer a privilege on titled bodies. It is, besides, easy to account for this result.

We have already seen that, in consecrating the right of primogeniture, and in stamping an inalienable character on the patrimony of a privileged caste, fiduciary laws not only disinherited the younger branches of a family, but tended, by little and little, to accumulate heritages in the hands of a number of individuals more and more restricted, through the effect of accidents in the succession and the failure of lines ; of which two causes the result was, that a small number of great houses rose upon the ruins of the entire caste, and that the younger branches, the victims of an unjust exclusion, suffered an indigence the more severe, that they were unable, without derogating from their rank, to escape from it by betaking themselves to some industrial occupation.

Thus is the gradual impoverishment of the titled families in the monarchies of Europe sufficiently explained. But how does it happen that the protection

afforded by majorats has not prevented a number of nobles from losing the advantages of wealth, which seemingly ought to result from them? Here we must take into account the influence of the prejudices and manners peculiar to the unoccupied classes, and above all, the evils inseparable from the transformation of an absolute right of property into a simple life-interest; in fact, even if the pride of rank and family had not made idleness a duty to the nobility, they would have found in the very nature of their privileges, invincible obstacles to the improvement of their domains. The funds which a free proprietor raises, either by the sale of part of his estate, or by mortgaging it, the holder of an entailed property is unable to procure. Does he wish to bring into cultivation a tract of waste land, to drain a marsh, or construct an iron work? Whatever advantages these operations may present to him, the impossibility of offering a guarantee to lenders deprives him of the means of realising the object in view. Much more, if an unforeseen accident happen to deteriorate his property, if he is called upon to restore a mill, a homestead that has fallen down, or repair an embankment, it is, for the most part, only by contracting loans on usurious terms—by entering into engagements ruinous in proportion to the risk of the lender—that he is able to prevent the wasting away of his property.

Of all kinds of property there is none that is less suited to the shackles of inalienability than that of land; it is exposed to so many accidents, and requires so much outlay, that unless there be a fund in reserve to meet them, the owner can never keep up its value. Doubtless, economy is a virtue not interdicted to nobles, but such are the difficulties inherent in their position,

and in the forms under which they possess, that while they have the most indispensable occasion for this virtue, everything conspires to make them despise it. With what appeals to their vanity are they not beset ! Complacent followers discourse to them of the splendour of their forefathers, their hospitality, the number of their servants, their feasts, their equipages, their horses and their hounds : not to display, in the same place, an equal magnificence, is held out as a sort of disgrace, until it too often happens that pride, feeding the inclinations growing out of idleness, nourishes them into ruinous passions. Such was the principal cause of the decay of a caste, whose condition invited it to luxury and dissipation, whilst it withheld the means of repairing the consequences to which they led. In ancient France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, misery had reached a great number of families who believed their dignity interested in keeping up a certain external splendour ; and there were very few noble fortunes that were not loaded with debts and encumbrances.

But it may here be asked, if privileged families have nothing but their entailed lands ? Does not a vulgar proverb, on the contrary, attest how careful they were to repair, by mercenary marriages, the breaches made in their fortunes by time and prodigality ? No doubt ; but these same nobles, if they received dowries with their wives, had to provide them for their daughters, and to assure provisions for their younger sons ; so that, sooner or later, these advances reduced them to the simple possession of the majorat. Institutions which prescribe what is unjust, always fail in producing the effect intended by them. It is to no purpose that fiduciary laws sacrifice natural justice to an object of

pure convenience, the heart of a father revolts against the idea of abandoning to the hardships of poverty, the children whom the wrongs of fortune for the most part only render more dear to him. Uneasy as to their future condition, he tries to prevent them from falling into indigence ; he leaves them all that he has in freehold estate, stock, and moveable effects ; at need he cuts down his woods, and reduces his rents for a sum in hand ; and the same things being repeated from one generation to another, the time arrives when the privileged heirs have only a property reduced in value, and which they are unable to dispose of.

To so many causes of impoverishment are joined other fruits, no less bitter, of the injustice of privilege. Without authority over a son whose fortune is independent of him, a father has no means of repressing his irregularities. On the other hand, family quarrels, springing from the jealousy which the inequality of division gives rise to betwixt brothers, cruelly disturb his repose ; he foresees the time when his younger children, thrown upon the world without other support than a distinguished name, will have to struggle against the attacks of poverty ; he sees his daughters without any other alternative than a compulsory celibacy, or late and ill-assorted marriages. Truly this is expiating too severely the advantages of supremacy, is paying too dear a price for the trappings of vanity !

Let us consider what advantages the nobility united to the exclusive possession of a vast portion of the soil, and we shall be astonished at the activity of the causes which led to its decline. In the greater part of the monarchies and principalities of Europe, it did not support the burdens of the social state, of which all the

advantages were its own. It was exempted from local and general taxation ; it enjoyed an exclusive right to military offices, to the higher functions of the judiciary order, and to the benefices of the Church. In France especially, nothing was spared to add to the prosperity of noble families ; they alone were received at court, and partook of the royal bounty ; there were few ministers who did not think it their duty to add to the means of opulence and distinction which they enjoyed ; but it was in vain that the public revenues were lavished on them,—that schools were opened for the education of their children,—that there remained reserved for them a number of places, employments, sinecures and pensions ; all these advantages were found insufficient, and the cries of distress which they set up during every reign, proved that there is no solid and durable prosperity out of the sphere of justice and equality.

It is a thing well worthy of remark, that while the inferior classes, struggling against the inequality of institutions, found in their industry the means of raising themselves to an increasing height of prosperity, the privileged castes were seen falling from their primitive grandeur, and suffering from indigence upon that soil which was exclusively theirs.

Besides, it is to be noticed, that for a long time the French nobility complained of the obstacles to their activity which entails imposed. In the States General of 1560 and 1615, it made a great effort to obtain the suppression of entails ; and the edict which limited them to three races in the provinces where the law was consuetudinary, was the result of that movement.

If at a late period it seemed to have changed its opinion, it is because circumstances were no longer the same. Under the reign of Louis XIV. the number of quarterings of nobility became a positive title of royal preference to a number of lucrative places ; from that time it was of consequence for the provincial nobility to be able to prove the antiquity of their race ; and as the possession of the domains, to which were attached the names and arms of their families, offered them the surest means of this, these nobles became reconciled to the institutions destined to perpetuate them.

CHAPTER IX.

ON A TERRITORIAL ARISTOCRACY CONSIDERED IN ITS CONNEXION WITH PUBLIC LIBERTY.

EVERY privileged body that has existed has justified its prerogatives by contending that they are necessary for the general weal. So long as princes sovereignly disposed of the power of the state, the nobility held itself out as the natural safeguard of their rights, and pretended that their respective interests were so completely identified, that everything which went to restrain its peculiar advantages, would infallibly diminish the security of the throne. When the progress of wealth and intelligence had made a power of the people, this language was of necessity modified ; it was then argued that aristocratical privileges were the surest ramparts of national liberties ; and that if the nobility had at times been a check on the sallies of the

democracy, it had no less served to repress the encroachments of the arbitrary power of the monarchs. An opinion so favourable to the maintenance of privileged bodies was likely to be received the more easily that history seemed to attest its correctness.

How can it, indeed, be questioned, that, without the stubborn resistance of the great vassals, the royal power, prematurely exercised over a population too ignorant and weak to make itself respected, would have crushed the germs of development to which we are indebted for the benefits of a progressive civilization? But can we truly and sincerely honour the aristocracy for a result which emanated from no generous feeling or liberal sentiment? It was for power and dominion that it battled; and if victory had crowned the efforts of the barons, there are numerous examples to warrant us in believing that they would not have left to the inferior classes more liberty than the nobles of Poland granted to their peasantry.

The appearance of a third power on the political stage came fortunately to dissipate this danger. Unable to make head against their vassals, kings favoured the establishment of communes; the latter in a short time threw an important weight into the balance, and thenceforth a sort of ponderation, the effect of the combination of the social forces, tempered the violence of their action. Thus were born the liberties of checks and counterpoises, a species of liberties too highly extolled, since, on an analysis of them, they are found to be the mere results of a truce made betwixt powers equally selfish and pernicious.

Still these liberties, such as they were, were better than anarchy or despotism. Introduce into the empires

of the East privileged bodies, give them wealth and power, and there will soon be formed a nucleus of identical interests and opinions, which, setting bounds to the inordinate caprices of the despot, will render the condition of the people more tolerable. But let us not be deceived on this point: it is not liberty; it is neither the honour, the surety, nor the industrial interests of the inferior classes, which the castes invested with a factitious superiority seek to protect; these bodies only bestir themselves for the maintenance or the increase of their own distinct and special rights; and their temporary utility is owing, as Montesquieu says, to this,—that every evil which sets limits to despotism is a good.

Besides, if we appeal to facts, the state of the people in past ages amply proves that they never found in the use which the aristocracy made of its power, the slightest indemnity for the sacrifices which its prerogatives imposed on them. If, from the concurrence of various unusual circumstances, the English nobility laboured in concert with the Commons for repressing the abuses of royalty, this extraordinary fact has no parallel in history; and in the rest of Europe we saw the people insulted, oppressed, and trampled on by the feudal barons, assisting the monarchs in overturning them. It is nevertheless certain that it was in the power of the aristocracy to obviate the abasement and ruin which this alliance of the kings and the people made them undergo. By making certain concessions, it would have changed the temper and feeling of its vassals; but in order to that it would have been necessary to bestow on these villains the advantages of liberty, to emancipate them from an odious and

detested servitude ; and the experience of all ages unfortunately shows that men set a lower value on political independence than on the pleasure of having inferiors. Thus, the nobility preferred command under a master to the abandonment of the prerogatives that flattered their pride ; until the people, a prey to their outrages, at last brought down to the rank of privileged subjects those thousands of petty sovereigns who had originated the feudal regime.

But we shall be told that times are changed ; that good laws have placed the people beyond the annoyances of the higher orders ; that the nobility are now enlightened ; and that by investing it with a legislative superiority we may turn to account, in favour of the liberties whose maintenance is desirable, the constancy of its doctrines, and that conservative spirit which it derives from its fixed and privileged condition.

To treat this question properly, we must first come to an understanding as to the meaning of the term Liberty, and consider at once the nature of the tendencies peculiar to all privileged bodies, and the nature of the interests which civilization breeds in the bosom of the community.

There are two kinds of liberty ; and up to this time they have been somewhat improperly designated, Political Liberty and Civil Liberty.

The first consists in the use of the rights of government ; in the participation by the individual in the power which rules him, as a member of the community. This is the species of liberty enjoyed by the Greeks, the Romans, the republics of Italy, Germany and Switzerland ; a liberty fruitful in great actions and great characters, but which, setting no bounds to the

authority exercised in the name of the multitude, has almost always overlooked the rights of individuals, and found its issue in the dissensions which grew out of the despotism of fickle and vacillating majorities.

The second consists in the independence of the rights essential to the development of the physical and moral faculties of the individual ; its aim is, to be able to make a free use of the means of well being, and elevation, which it derives, whether from nature or social circumstances. Civil liberty only exacts political rights as guarantees against the abuses of power ; it may therefore exist under very different forms of government : it is sufficient that these forms, protecting persons and property, oppose no obstacle to the improvement of the laws, the expression of opinion, to the development of industry, and to individual and public prosperity. It is this species of liberty that has caused England to flourish ; and which, in monarchies, tends to procure for the subjects the establishment of the representative system.

Political liberty, such as I have defined it, does not fall within the scope of this work. It is, moreover, found to be incompatible with the existence of privilege. So soon as there is not an absolute equality in the rights of individuals, the privileged families may remain free, inasmuch as they merely obey the laws which themselves have made ; *they* may be so, as were the patricians of Venice and Berne, or the nobles of Poland ; but the rest of society lives in a state of political thralldom.

The question, therefore, to be decided is, Whether the existence of a territorial aristocracy is essential to the maintenance of the advantages comprised under the

name of Civil Liberty ; and whether, in a constitutional monarchy, laws made under the dominating influence of a privileged minority could constantly tend to the general weal, and to the protection of the dignity, the industry, and fortunes of all ?

And first of all must it be observed, that every privilege necessarily restrains the exercise of the natural rights of all ; and that the masses, deprived of the faculty of acquiring the advantages and distinctions exclusively reserved for the small number, in no case enjoy the entire use of their means of well-being and elevation : so in that point of view there is already an infringement of civil liberty. It may, indeed, be urged, that without personal sacrifices, individuals could not obtain any of the blessings attached to the social state, and that those made to the aristocracy may be classed with the taxes paid to the government. Let us therefore pass on to other considerations.

That an aristocracy united by an identical interest may circumscribe the exercise of the royal authority, and repress its abuses, is a certain fact ; but that it should make use of its power in a way useful to the masses, and favourable to the general liberties, it is necessary for that end, that there exist between its tendencies, its wants, and those of the community, such an agreement and harmony, that every legislative measure will prove to both at all times equally advantageous. But this is impossible.

There are few facts more clearly demonstrated in the history of the human mind, than the influence which self-interest exercises over opinions. Wherever collective bodies of individuals attribute to themselves public functions or special rights, from distinct modes

of action soon spring interests, in the pursuit of which there arises an *esprit de corps*. The more influence these aggregations of men possess, the more prone they are to give effect to their private views, and to impose on the social body the forms most favourable to an increase of their advantages. There is not one example of a privileged corporation that has not abused its authority ; and nothing, indeed, can be more natural. Men always exaggerate their personal importance ; they easily believe in the pre-eminence of the part they play in society ; and this single feeling is sufficient to hide from their eyes the injustice of the acts which serve their interests at the expense of the public. What was done in the early ages by the feudal aristocracy, the clergy, and the parliaments, was done over again by the municipal corporations ; and as often as we grant too much political influence to men taken from any class or profession, be it what it may, we see the prejudices of their order and an *esprit de corps* animate them with desires inimical to the general interests. Form, for example, a council of manufacturers : what would they ask of you ? Premiums on the exportation of the products of their industry, the prohibition of foreign merchandise—in fine, regulations which would hand over to them, on gainful terms, the exclusive enjoyment of the national market. Take an assembly of agriculturists and landed proprietors,—their views would not be more liberal ; they will discourse to you of the importance of agriculture, and the necessity of encouraging it ; they will stand out against the introduction of foreign wool, cattle, and grain ; the burdens of land will above all be the subject of their complaints ; and if you were to give way to them, the

whole public taxes would soon fall on the population of the towns. Such are the instigations of private interest.

The point now mooted is not a vain supposition, but is attested by facts ; and in the republics of Italy, as in Zurich, the corporations of trades, arts, and professions, did not show themselves less exclusive, jealous, or greedy of political power and prerogatives, than the territorial nobility of the different monarchies of Europe.

Without doubt, certain individuals, possessed of elevated views, and of upright and reflecting minds, may rise superior to the suggestions of pride and selfishness,—but bodies never ; and aristocracies less than any, because over them the vanity of rank, fortune, and birth, naturally exercise the most influence.

It is not even necessary for that purpose that their members have grown old in habits of supremacy, or that the reminiscences of an ancient domination should exalt and stimulate in them the prejudices adverse to natural equity.

Take the superiorities existing in any country you choose ; rally them by the privileges of property ; finally transform them into a positive aristocracy destined to enjoy hereditarily a legislative supremacy :—perhaps the action of the government will not be immediately perverted : it may be, that the sentiments, principles, and notions received in the first situation, will for some time resist the counsels suggested by the new ; but, in the end, the tree will bear its fruits ; from distinctive privileges, calculated to flatter human vanity, will emanate selfish doctrines, haughty and jealous prejudices ; the voice of ambition will make

itself heard, an *esprit de corps* will be formed ; and, sooner or later, a privileged minority, moved by the desire of fortifying the advantages of which it believes itself worthy, will impress on the government a direction as false as it is noxious.

Much more,—admit the impossible ;—admit that, satisfied with purely honorary and lucrative privileges, the aristocracy bounds its wish to the preserving of them ;—well, in that case still, the fixity of its interests and its doctrines become a source of inconvenience fatal to liberty, and the ordinary march of events will produce a separation of its interests from those of the governed.

This is because nations are never stationary. Out of the depths of ignorance and misery we see them rise gradually in opulence ; and until the hand of the Eternal closes their career, they go on from age to age increasing the treasure of civilization. To the lights, to the means of well-being, amassed by extinct generations, each generation adds the tribute of its own acquisitions ; and, in proportion as they grow old, societies more powerful and enlightened stretch their empire over the material world. Thence it happens that the extensive changes which take place in their manners, ideas, interests, and wants require the remodelling of the laws and institutions made for other conjunctures.

Will the aristocracy second the onward tendencies impressed on society by the progressive development of the human faculties ? will it accord to the interests resulting from the multiplication of the modes of intellectual or collective activity efficient guarantees ? Assuredly not ; for such is the nature of the

intellectual and physical wants called forth by the very march of civilization, that it could not do so without working its own destruction.

See, in fact, how many causes urge the people who prosper, to enlarge the sphere of their activity, and to arrive at an equality of rights ! On the one hand, according as social order becomes perfect, an increasing industry makes the evils attached to the immobility of capitals more severely felt : on the other, it is really impossible for an aristocracy, placed out of the circle of industrial and mercantile interests and pursuits, to conceive the march of them, and to divine their wants ; and however well intentioned we may suppose it to be, it will only be by chance that the laws made by it will be properly directed.

This is not all. There are feelings of justice and personal dignity, whose development urges men to demand all the rights of which the advantage is known to them. Arrived at a certain degree of intellectual culture, material well-being no longer suffices for them ; they require enjoyments of a higher order ; they desire to make use of the knowledge which they have acquired ; they wish to be consulted in what regards their own interests ; and, perceiving that affairs of government are their affairs, they naturally seek to have a part in them.

Let them be taxed, as much as you will, with pride and temerity ; it is just and natural that classes habituated to order, and the sweets of property, should wish to know both the necessity and the object of the sacrifices which are imposed on them. Interest and patriotism at once suggest this to them ; interest, which tells them not to accord to the state more than

is strictly necessary ; and patriotism, which makes the prosperity of their country an object of glory, and engages them to occupy themselves with all that can increase or preserve it.

It is in governments where the aristocracy enjoys an exclusive power, that these tendencies manifest themselves with the most dangerous activity. Far from inspiring confidence, privilege becomes a source of humiliation for all whom it excludes from the political circle. On a level with the privileged order in point of education and fortune, the members of the disinherited classes are offended by the partiality of the laws, which condemn them to an injurious inequality ; they lay claim to an equality of which they feel themselves worthy ; and if in times of calmness and tranquillity their efforts may be baffled, at the least critical event they are seen to rise in arms to escape from their odious dependence, and to obtain the rights the want of which is felt to be insupportable.

Let us call to mind with what ardour, on the invasion of Switzerland by the French armies, the subjects of the aristocracies rose in revolt against their rulers, who had, nevertheless, not been wanting either in prudence or moderation : but nothing can reconcile men to institutions that wound their dignity ; and the hatred which they bear them is intense in proportion as they feel themselves more capable of exercising the rights withheld from them. Thus, both in the physical and moral order of things, everything concurs to produce betwixt an aristocracy jealous of its privileges, and the population eager to effect their suppression, a struggle which puts an end to the pretended advantages of an inequality of rights. With what blindness must not

privileged bodies be possessed, who would continue to protect the developments of a civilization, whose whole tendencies menace them! Thus are they seen, at the first appearance of danger, to think only of dispelling it by disarming the classes formidable by their numbers and wealth. Does industry raise up rival superiorities? they compress it. Does knowledge discern the injustice and folly of their prerogatives? they proscribe it. Does liberty become a weapon of offence in the hands of their adversaries? they restrain it:—the smallest reforms may become the inlets to greater innovations; they will not concede any. And if the population becomes irritated and restive, laws more and more coercive are made to keep it in order. But what happens? The aristocracy either succumbs, or it imposes on the masses an arbitrary and tyrannical yoke. Such is the inevitable issue of every system, which delivers over to a privileged minority the care of providing for the wants of society. From the very march of civilization will spring such a clashing of interests betwixt the people and the minority, that the latter, far from protecting the imperfect and fragile liberties that exist, will soon be obliged to sacrifice them to the necessities of its own preservation.

Besides, we may on this question make an appeal to experience. It has been said, that a state will possess no stability if fixed and privileged conditions are not the pillars of the edifice; without supremacies founded on birth, there will be no regulating power vigorous enough to restrain by turns the encroachments of monarchical authority, and the passions of the people. For my part, acknowledging that property confers on individuals a certain influence in society; — admitting,

that from its modes of distribution result both the social hierarchies and the spirit peculiar to each of them, and that consequently the immutability of conditions impresses a degree of permanency on political doctrines ;—I proceed to facts ; I interrogate history, and I ask, if ever the fixity of the distinctions of nobility has served as a rampart to the national liberties ?

It is assuredly not in France that we must expect to find the traces of the efforts of the aristocracy in favour of public liberty. Read the speeches of the orators of the assembled orders in the States-general—precious records of the spirit of past times !—and what do we learn from them ? The profound contempt of the nobility for the middle class ; the inveterate hatred borne by the latter to their oppressors. Examine all the revolutions favourable to monarchical power, and you will see what prodigious advantage it drew from the divisions which odious privileges kept up betwixt the classes.

Perhaps Spain will show us an aristocracy beneficially interposed betwixt the royal power and the democracy ? Alas ! no. Spain, too, possessed valuable liberties ; Ximenes deprived her of them. The communes took arms to recover them, and torrents of blood inundated the provinces. It was the part of the nobility to throw a decisive weight into the balance ; it had to choose betwixt its country and the favour of the prince : it did not long hesitate ; and by its hands were stifled the last sighs of Spanish liberty.

Was it in Denmark that the nobility defended public rights ? Their oppression was so galling that the people preferred to it the despotism of the sovereign ! Was it in Sweden ? There the nobility, crouching and

trembling before every king of a resolute and ambitious character, carried on under the reigns of weaker princes an unworthy traffic in their suffrages.

In Holland, even, with what assiduity did not the ambitious municipal corporations fortify their privileges ! They ended by making a monopoly of power ; and the moral state of the nation alone saved it from the most dangerous abuses of an oligarchic communal regime.

England, it will be said, has flourished under the sway of a constitution confided to the hands of an aristocracy of the soil ; and here, indeed, is the only example which can be opposed to us. Granted ;—but does even England experience the evils which another regime would have spared her ? No doubt her prosperity is brilliant, but it is relatively to other states worse organized that we must judge her. Who knows to what superior destinies better laws would not have conducted her ? I will, moreover, examine in a separate chapter the social state of that country ; and the reader will then see what meed of praise ought to be awarded to the English aristocracy.

Such are the facts which mark the tendencies natural to the aristocracy. Convincingly do they prove the impossibility of long identifying with the general welfare the interests of the castes upheld by exclusive laws ;—they show us that those hierarchies, officially charged with the maintenance of public liberties, always make them an instrument of private emolument ; they teach us, that of those rival bodies, those privileged powers, whose balancing is held out as necessary for repressing the evils of despotism, the assumed mission is impracticable, and that they always end

by accommodating and coalescing, to the prejudice of the masses.

If it be said, that it is not meant to grant to an aristocracy of the soil a domination exclusive of all popular influence, but simply a preponderance necessary for the stability of political doctrines,—I reply, that in that case the democratical interest might mitigate the vices inseparable from any too exclusive a representation, but could not destroy them ; and that, sooner or later, the inequality would increase, and disturb the relations upon the constancy of which dependence was placed. No ; in no factitious organization must we seek a stability incompatible with the present state of civilization : Heaven has not permitted in politics, any more than in morality, good to come out of evil ; and privilege can never become the solid foundation of national prosperity. Besides, what is liberty, if not the full enjoyment of all the means of perfection, individual and public ? and can it exist where wealth and distinction form the exclusive appanage of a small number ? In the social order of things a great number of tendencies are at work ; and if each of them seek to prevail over the rest, the action natural to these opposing tendencies will always keep it within due bounds. To fortify aristocracy or democracy, to confer on either artificial powers, is to disturb the harmony of the interests of society ; is to cement by force what the progress of public reason would perfectly reconcile,—in a word, is to condemn a people either to fatal dissensions, or to a corrupting immobility.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE PRINCIPLES TO WHICH THE PROGRESS OF
CIVILIZATION TENDS TO GIVE PREVALENCE IN THE
SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

It follows from the examination which we have made of the principal consequences of privilege, that, unjust in principle, it is only in ages of ignorance that it offers some advantages ; and that, according as the intellectual and moral condition of societies is ameliorated, forms more favourable to liberty and equality ought to prevail. Whatever name we give to the regime under which, no section of the community being advantaged to the prejudice of the greater number, the distinctions of rank and opulence become the portion of the most capable, prudent, and fortunate—let us call it democracy, social order, the equality of rights—it matters not,—such is the end or result to which the perfectibility of society really conducts nations.

It is not merely to the increasing pressure of the evils of privilege that we must refer the resistance offered to it ; it is much more to the national repugnance which, in virtue of its moral constitution, man experiences for all that carries on it the stamp of injustice.

Men have sometimes contested the reality of the relations which connect the economical and intellectual state of societies with their moral condition ; and on this head, have cited the example of nations whom an

increasing corruption caused to fall from the high rank in which the refinements of art ought seemingly to have fixed them ; but let us look at these cases more narrowly, and we shall see the people, as in the Italian republics of the Middle Ages, becoming depraved only by falling under a degrading foreign yoke—or, as in the states of antiquity, by deriving from extensive conquests an aggravation of the vices inherent in the state of slavery which weighed on the multitude. In the natural order of things, there is nothing which contributes to physical well-being and the progress of intelligence, which does not also tend to ennoble the moral character of the masses.

Heaven, in fact, has not separated the intellectual from the moral development of man ; nor permitted, that in enlightening himself, he should acquire over the material world an empire of which he is not inclined to make a good use. In giving him conscience,—in willing that he should become indignant at every act of violence or bad faith, and that he should find in remorse the punishment of his faults,—it makes the love of justice the fundamental base of social order ; and this instinctive sentiment acting more forcibly and surely as man learns better to weigh the remote consequences of things, the intellectual naturally unites itself with the moral condition of nations. Thus do they, in an advanced state of civilization, refuse to submit to those legislative iniquities which ignorance made them endure in ages of barbarism. Capable of making a more judicious and profitable use of their means of action, they have no longer need of those harsh and coercive laws, which previously with difficulty sufficed for the maintenance of the public peace ; and coveting a

liberty of which they feel themselves worthy, they protest against the obstacles opposed to the inoffensive enjoyment of their faculties.

But if intelligence purify the inclinations of man, it also renders him more sensible to the breach of the duties which equity prescribes. Such is the force of this instinct of our nature, that, even in things that do not personally interest us, the sight of oppression incenses us, and rouses our indignation against its authors. What cries of horror, for example, were not raised on all sides, as soon as the voice of generous men had unveiled the atrocities of the slave-trade ! With what transports of ardour did not the most enlightened nations applaud the recent efforts of Greece to free herself from the Mussulman tyranny ! The same cause makes men display still more energy against that injustice of which they are themselves the victims. Let some social iniquity happen to strike them,—let them discover the partiality of an institution—let them find themselves wronged in the use of the rights of which they have the consciousness—they become heated, they accuse the state of robbing them ; from day to day opinion pronounces itself more strongly ; and woe to the government which attempts to resist the wishes emanating from a sense of justice, and liberties withheld !

Let us render homage to the power of a sentiment which exercises so noble an influence upon the destinies of the human race. No doubt, interest well understood would lead societies gradually to modify their institutions ; but a sense of equity, which grows with knowledge, seconds and directs their efforts. Recognising injustice wherever institutions sacrifice the weak to

the strong, the poor to the rich, the ignorant multitude to an eclectic few, knowledge demands their suppression ; and the more it increases, the farther advances are made in the ways whose final term is the equality of rights.

Still would it be with difficulty that it caused the triumph of the maxims revealed by an innate sentiment of justice, if the powers interested in maintaining inequality preserved their primitive ascendancy. But, by an admirable effect of civilization, the same causes that change and rectify the views of the people, insensibly deprive the privileged orders of the means of resistance.

See what are the real foundations of aristocratical power :—the imperfection of the social organization on the one hand ; on the other, the want of a sufficient authority for the protection of the weak. To establish the domination of the great, the husbandman must find it necessary to obey a master in order to the protection of his harvest ; the other, exposed to the spoliatory aggressions of his neighbours, must owe his security to the affection and devotedness of his vassals. But civilization, by strengthening public order, changes by little and little these circumstances, the real sources of seignoral power. In proportion as society becomes tranquil, the great proprietors, having no longer occasion to fight for the rights guaranteed by the state, think of drawing the greatest possible advantage from their estates ; greedy of wealth, it is to the best modes of culture and farming that they give the preference ; and as one of the conditions essential to production is the independence of the producer, to the obligations of vassalage succeed stipulations, which, in giving liberty

to the inferior classes, separate their interests from those of their ancient masters.

Thus, in a state of civilization brought to perfection, there glides betwixt the interests of domination and the interests of wealth, an opposition destructive of that class of affections and duties, which had for a long time attached to the lot of the great the mass of the population. It is only a century ago that, at the first signal of the chief of the clan, thousands of Scotsmen flocked to his banner, proud to fight or die in his cause. But let a descendant of Argyle or Montrose, raising the standard of revolt, call at the present day his tenants to arms—such is the change that has taken place in the interests and manners, that he would be justly deemed mad: it is because, in striving to increase the revenue of their vast domains, the nobility have broken with their own hands the chains of ancient vassalage. Taking from ignorant and submissive vassals the lands which they cultivated badly, they let them to farmers more industrious and wealthy; and this last class, only owing to their proprietors the fulfilment of the obligations in their voluntary contracts, had no longer any motive to expose life and property at the capricious call of an aristocracy, which, on its part, would not make the slightest sacrifice on their account.

Such is the real cause which has disarmed the feudal aristocracy, and raised up insurmountable barriers to the establishment of its ancient patronage. Thus, counting from the thirteenth century, a continued movement has caused to bend before the active principles of civilization, the compressive institutions which had disgraced the infancy of European society; at every step they struck off a part of the fetters which bound

them in their origin ; and by little and little the serfs of the Middle Ages obtained the rank of citizens. No doubt there remains much to do before the equality of rights shall triumph completely over the passions and prejudices that yet oppose it ; but if we are to judge by the past, there is no doubt that the people will finally reach that state, where, no unjust obstacle arresting their efforts, they will fully enjoy their means of distinction, and will raise themselves as high as their own faculties and the vicissitudes of fortune make it possible to do.

Let us not, however, confound this anticipated state of society with the extravagant and chimerical equality preached by the Mezdecks, Münchers, the Levellers of England, and some other sects that sprung out of the storms of the French Revolution.—If an equality of rights exact that the field of wealth and distinction should be left open to all, it is without asking the equalization of rights purely political ; and provided the conditions attached to the enjoyment of the last leave them accessible to the efforts of individuals, it admits all the precautions of an equitable prudence. Inasmuch as it is important to the well-being and the dignity of the people that no privilege of rank or birth be devolved on a special class, and that all the blessings and advantages of social order be made the attendants of labour and prudence, in so much would it be unreasonable not to keep in view the capacities of the people, in the distribution of political rights. Before mixing in public affairs, it is necessary to understand them, and that men be in a situation that implies an independent exercise of the franchise. To call the ignorant and unfortunate classes to the exercise of sovereign power, is to place the state in danger of anarchy—and, what

would seem more extraordinary if numerous examples did not prove it, of the perils of an oligarchic domination. Thus, in ancient Rome, where the populace sold its suffrages for bread, it was by means of the arms, and under the forms of the mob, that a small number of illustrious personages disputed honours and commands. So also, in several burghs in England, and in the counties of Ireland, the very lowness of the franchise brings to the poll bands of freemen and tenants, who give over the government to the great proprietors. Without doubt, it is better to enlarge the circle of political capacities than to confine it too much. But if it be to be feared that exclusion may introduce into the laws a fatal partiality, there are other evils, which can only be obviated by annexing to political rights conditions necessary for ensuring an independent and enlightened use of them.

This point being discussed, it will be seen, that what is understood by the term, an equality of rights, is a complete absence of privilege in the matter of property, a free access to all distinctions, civil and political. This is what is signified; and surely there is nothing but what is just in such an order of things.

I shall not enumerate all the advantages inherent in an equality of rights: we may describe at length the evils and inconveniences of a sickly state of the human body—we do not make an eulogy of health except by counting the sufferings which it spares us. I shall therefore confine myself to a refutation of the doctrines and objections raised against the equality of rights; then, after having pointed out some of their beneficial effects, I shall indicate the forms and modes of government which it prescribes.

CHAPTER XI.

ON CERTAIN DOCTRINES OPPOSED TO THE EQUALITY
OF RIGHTS.

"HERE are either madmen or impostors," said a king of Siam, of the Dutch, who tried to make him understand that they were the subjects of no master. Such are men who make their own knowledge the standard of what is possible; taking, as Mirabeau says, the walls of their shops for the horizon of the world, it is only by a great effort of the imagination that they succeed in conceiving an order of things different from what surrounds them. Nor is it the vulgar only that we must reproach with this species of blindness, for the greatest geniuses have not been free of it. Look at the most celebrated social theories, and you will see them repose on a mere fiction; on the assumption that, weary of isolation and independence, scattered savages, assembling some fine morning for the purpose of abdicating their rights in favour of a supreme power, founded at a single stroke, and as it were by inspiration, both society and government. Assuredly it is difficult to conceive any thing more devoid of probability; but, struck from their infancy with the imposing spectacle of royalty, accustomed to consider it as the first condition of the social state, these great writers concocted an hypothesis which, as it was not physically impossible, explained their simultaneous origin.

After such an example, let us not be astonished at the influence exercised over political opinions by the

forms, maxims, and traditions of by-gone centuries. It is not after having heard social hierarchies so long extolled as the safeguards of thrones, and the bucklers of public liberties, that men can view with a favourable eye a system which repudiates them ; in this way, opinions unfavourable to an equality of rights have preserved a dangerous authority ; and it is so much more important to examine their sources that they do not entirely arise from the influence of reminiscences and habit.

Amidst these sources, there is one which, did it not possess the authority of Adam Smith, I would have passed over in silence. I speak of the existence of a natural inclination in man for systematic proportions. Whether it be from mental weakness, or the influence of the principles of order and beauty derived from the contemplation of physical objects, it is certain that the human mind always inclines to prefer symmetrical and regular forms ; and that this taste exercises a marked influence over our ideas of social order.

Strong in proportion as the people are less enlightened, this inclination is excessive among savages ; one would say that, proud of a recent dominion over the objects of creation, they delight in fashioning it to their will, in disfiguring and torturing it. Fashions, clothes, customs, institutions, the development even of the human body, all acquire, under their hands, shapes and forms, whose regularity is for the most part at variance with the wisest suggestions of nature and reason. Thus, while some set themselves to lengthen the ears, or flatten the heads, of their children, others try to stop the growth of their feet ; among others, it is to the nose and eye-brows that they seek to give a con-

formation agreeable to certain types of perfection borrowed from the material world ; finally, such, as the illustrious Dugald Stewart remarks, is the universality of this mania, that to leave to the human form its natural development seems to be one of the last efforts of civilization. But, says the same writer, the case is altogether analogous in regard to the sciences, whose object is to aid nature in curing our evils, developing our intellectual faculties, correcting our vices, and regulating our political economy.

Facts are not wanting to prove the empire which this intellectual inclination has over the principles of social order. So great is its influence in ages of ignorance and barbarism, that we should run no risk in judging of the antiquity of societies by the compass or extent of the forms which they adopted. Thus it was in the rich valleys of the Ganges and the Nile, where the mildness of the climate and the abundance of the means of subsistence encouraged the rapid increase of the human species, that, treated as brute matter, it was divided into castes, and subjected in its development to arbitrary and degrading divisions. If, according as civilization advanced, we no longer see in legislators so intense a love of exact and symmetrical forms, still there is not one of them who has entirely escaped its influence.

It was not merely legislators, proud of their works, and desirous of making them eternal, who carried into the social organization those ideas of order, durability, and perfection, which were borrowed from the material order of things ; the greatest writers of antiquity do not fall short of them in this respect. With what admiration, for example, are not Xenophon and Poly-

bius filled for the strong and durable institutions of Sparta? What can be conceived more beautiful, according to Diodorus, than the laws of Sesostriis, and the immutable regularity of the proportions of the social edifice in Egypt? And Plato ought to be studied, says Montesquieu, if we desire to have a just idea of the manners and laws of Greece. Plato, is not even he the slave of similar doctrines? Only seeing in the citizen a fixed quantity of elementary matter, does he not sacrifice his affections, inclinations, liberty—in a word, all that constitutes his individuality, to one single object—the preservation of the forms and systematic proportions, to which he attributes the quality of beauty?

It is true that, more rich in lights and experience, the moderns have purged their conceptions of a part of the errors which misled the ancients; but how many among them even, far from estimating institutions by the degree of felicity which they produce to individuals, have, like Machiavel, allowed themselves to be led away alike by the notion of a perfection attached to durability, and the apparent order and regularity that hierarchical distinctions seemed to maintain. Such is the rock on which Montesquieu so often founders; and it has been with reason remarked, that he appreciates laws rather according to their relations with the maintenance of what is, than with what ought to be.

We may, perhaps, sufficiently account for the existence of an intellectual tendency so strong and decided by the influence even of the language of which we make use in political science.

In describing, by terms borrowed from the material order of things, the different elements of the social

body, we involuntarily mix up with the ideas which we receive from them, false and deceptive notions suggested by the very drapery in which these ideas are clothed. Thence, for example, comes the habit of seeing in society an edifice, of which hierarchies, classes, and royalty form the foundations, the body, and the summit; and from the same cause results the fatal inclination to judge of it by the same rules, as if we believed it necessary to find again in its organization forms and relations analogous to those which give beauty and solidity to material edifices.

However this may be, far from me be the intention of attributing to this view of the subject a higher degree of importance than it merits. It is the business of intelligence to purify human reason; but assuredly there are still too many who tell us, that unless we classify and separate the different portions of the community, the social edifice, without base or solidity, must fall to pieces at the first violent shock, for us to doubt, that a long time must elapse before society shall have thrown off all the errors, arising either from a confounding of the principles of the physical system with those of morals and politics, or from the imperfection of language.

We must now examine the causes that afford less ground of dispute. Such, amongst others, is the influence of historical reminiscences.

The traditions of the Aristocracy come to us decked out in the colours of poetry, and with that halo of the marvellous, so captivating to ignorance and credulity. The Aristocracy has for its ancestors the Paladins or knights, who, like the heroes or demigods of ancient Greece, travelled over the earth to avenge the oppressed

and to punish the outrages of violence ; and at the romantic tales of their lofty darings all imaginations take fire. In less fabulous times, with all the exploits, glories, and recollections dear to national pride, are associated the names of certain ancient families ; and this is enough to attract towards them a sort of patriotic interest, which is never without its influence on public opinion.

On the contrary, in historical recollections, every thing tends to injure the cause of the masses, and to bring them into discredit. Whilst the Aristocracy, raised to the top of the social scale, always stand forth as the preservers of established order, the people are branded as innovators, and loaded with the odium of aggressions fertile in calamities. This is a result of the unfortunate state of the ancient society. Trodden on by their Seigneurs, exposed to a thousand outrages, how could they break the yoke that oppressed them without attacking the powers that existed, and giving over society to all the horrors of civil war ? Thus, without inquiring if their pretensions were founded in justice, —if, to make themselves a place in the field entirely occupied by oppressors, there remained to them other means than an appeal to force, ignorant chroniclers have made a crime of the misfortunes of which their revolts were the indications ; and as they do not speak of the people unless to bring them on the stage in periods of turbulence and disorder, and taking bloody vengeance with arms in their hands, men have come to believe that such was their natural character, and to attach to the idea of democracy that of a tendency to anarchy and subversion.

Unfortunately, the events of the French Revolution

were little calculated to correct these erroneous impressions. So many excesses and spoliations, so many doctrines proclaiming a hatred to all powers, because all had been equally cruel and tyrannical, dishonoured the popular cause to a degree, that Europe, seized with alarm, did not make allowance to the conquerors, for that necessity of order and justice, whose ardour, increased by the recent spectacle of a hideous anarchy, made them too easily bend under the yoke, gradually applied, of the imperial despotism.

Far from me be the design to absolve the French democracy from the iniquities which sullied its victory. But these iniquities, after all, what was more culpable in them than in the countless enormities attributed to the Aristocracy, the Clergy, and Monarchy; in a word, in those of all the powers, in whose name men have so often shed each others' blood, and torn each other to pieces? Unfortunate humanity! Odious vengeance, bloody proscriptions; such have been in every time the sad fruits of intestine struggles! Let us blame them severely, but at least let us be impartial in our blame; and let us not view with more indulgence the outrages of power than those of the people in revolt against the exactions and the insults, with which privilege and tyranny had drenched them.

It is, besides, falling into a great mistake to confound with the real tendencies of a democracy arrived at the enjoyment of all the benefits of independence and an equality of rights, the spirit which was formerly propagated in the masses by the humiliations attached to a state of vassalage. So long as privilege divides them, there is necessarily a war betwixt classes unequally treated; and as the efforts made by those who suffer to

raise themselves from an unjust and painful subjection, excite the privileged to fortify a supremacy that is menaced, it follows that all tend not only reciprocally to invade each other, but also to deprive the government of the power necessary to the success of its designs.

Such was the spectacle which in old Europe was presented by the conflicts engaged from the 12th century betwixt the feudal Aristocracy and the middle classes, eager to shake off their galling yoke. At that period, all the interests were hostile, all were invading, because there was in fact no society, no common interest betwixt the masters and their slaves ; and the multitude, given over as a prey to the despoiling hands of a small number, strove for the acquirement of rights indispensable for their repose and security. But the views and interests of the social body changed with circumstances ; and we might as well draw conclusions unfavourable to the democracy of the present day, from the base servility of the Chinese people, or of the Sūdras of India, as from the hostile tendencies of the old middle classes against the powers which refused them justice.

It is nevertheless according to the ideas suggested by the spectacle of the strifes and tendencies engendered by privilege and a factitious inequality, that men have judged of the social tendencies under a regime absolutely opposite. They beheld all the special interests come into collision, and tend to domination ; they had seen that at the issue of civil discords, concessions made to the injured portion of the community kept up a certain calm until the day when the development of their strength, and the need of enlarging their

sphere of activity, excited them to set up new pretensions ; and thence came the belief that, unless the democratic interest were hemmed in with obstacles, this universal interest would overturn in its impetuous course, even the powers whose existence is indispensable to the maintenance of public security.

We have a remarkable example of the errors into which the forgetfulness of this distinction may lead, in the celebrated assertion made by a French minister, in exposing the reasons of a proposed law relative to the liberty of the press. "The democracy in this country," says he, "is every where full of vigour and energy ;—it exists in industry, in the laws, in the reminiscences, in men and in things ;—it is a torrent that sweeps along brimful within weak embankments, which with difficulty contain and resist it." He then declared the urgency of stopping its further development by the arm of the law. Examine this eloquent declaration of the dangers attached to the democratic influence, and you will find in it most of the erroneous notions which I have mentioned. The question was of the tendencies natural to a society free of the chains of privilege ; and lo ! forgetting the place which the intellectual and moral parts of man hold in all social tendencies, he makes of them a torrent ready to burst its banks, and swallow up the edifice of the State ; finally, confounding the artificial interests of privileged bodies with the interests of a population entered under the common law, he supposes that, impelled by a sort of instinctive aversion to power, it will march with giant strides towards disorder and anarchy ; that is to say, towards an order of things essentially destructive of the guarantees which the progress of industry,

and the increase of wealth, make indispensably necessary.

But let those who hold such language take heart,—such is not, such cannot be, the spirit of a society which has no chains to break, injuries to avenge, guarantees to demand, nor conquests to make. Men are less blind, and much wiser than is supposed ; they know that all the advantages of social order hold by the existence of an authority protective of life and property ; and that to rise up against it is to compromise their most precious interests. Thus do we never see them provoke or desire its ruin, without reasons perfectly well-founded. Enemies of every government which outrages their dignity, contemns the rights of which they have the consciousness, or throws obstacles in the way of their ameliorating their destiny ; they, on the contrary, are passionately attached to the powers whose beneficent action they experience ; and their wishes are then bounded to the preservation of their acquired advantages.

Is it believed that, under the regime of equality, the hatred of individual superiorities must animate the masses ? But these superiorities have in them nothing humiliating, nothing onerous, — barring the way to none,—they present themselves to the eye only as distinguished proofs of the rewards assured to talent and industry. Is there reason to dread that secret impatience, which a painful condition always keeps up in the labouring classes ? But where lies the danger, if these classes have no political power ? and besides, under what system will a greater number of persons be found interested by the ties of property in the maintenance of peace and public tranquillity ? Assuredly I

am far from pretending that any social form can reach a degree of perfection exclusive of all subject of trouble or discord ; but it would require a very extraordinary concurrence of circumstances for a people, to whom the experience of the benefits of an equality of rights, and a liberty sufficient to maintain them, leaves nothing more to covet, to have any desire, other than that of preserving out of the reach of attack and violence advantages so fruitful in wellbeing and prosperity.

Unfortunately, with the influence of errors arising from a false appreciation of the motives which direct the conduct of the popular classes under a partial and unjust regime, are mixed up the influence of religious creeds equally ill interpreted. Before certain philosophers of the 18th century had maintained, that men had left behind them, in the depths of the forests, their first asylum, innocence and liberty, theologians had drawn the same inferences from original sin. To listen to them, man being a creature fallen from his original purity, and relegated to earth in expiation of an hereditary offence, any increase of his power and independence must be fatal. Did they go so far as to grant the perfectibility of his faculties, far from repeating with the wise king of Israel, " Happy the man, who has found wisdom, and who advances in knowledge," they maintained, that pride corrupts the fruits of it, and implored the powerful of the earth to load the people with chains, the removal of which would let loose the evil inclinations of mankind. How just was the indignation, with which the authors of these desolating doctrines inspired the virtuous Fenelon ! " For them," said he, " God is only a terrible being, for me he is only a good one ; I cannot consent to make him a

tyrant, who desires us to advance in loading us with fetters, and who punishes us if we remain still."

Further : if, in their desire of crushing human reason and freedom under the weight of inflexible and compressive rules, these ascetic writers had shewn themselves the observers of a strict impartiality, it had been something ; but, sad examples of the inconsistency of the human mind ! it is to a chosen few that they delegate the care of fixing the destinies of their fellow men ; it is in confiding this care to these privileged beings—who are mere men, after all—in investing them with an authority swelled out with all that has been robbed from the masses—it is in surrounding them with glory, honours, and wealth, with all that inflames their pride and passions, that they make the will of these men the supreme law of society, and that they condemn us to submit ourselves to all their caprices. Thus, that same reason, so frail that a little liberty would infallibly deprave it, is of a sudden purified and refined in the possession of the smaller number, and that, too, in the midst of luxury and pomp ; it is when exposed to the corrupting breath of voluptuousness and flattery, that this minority displays its wisdom, and becomes a beacon of safety for poor humanity ! Ah, even if the absurdity of such a conclusion should escape notice, how can it fail to be seen, that, in delivering over the multitude to the caprices of kings and great personages—that, denying it all right to independence and liberty—we necessarily separate society into two classes, the one of dominators invested with all the sweets of life, and holding in its hands the elements of all terrestrial blessings, the other, of wretches condemned to crawl and grovel in the miry

paths of ignorance, vice, and misery ; and that, in so doing, we sanction the grossest iniquity.

I know it. Across the phases of a progressive civilization, in the midst of the scenes which change the face of nations, it is difficult to judge exactly of the bearing of laws and institutions ; but if there be some of them of which experience alone can disclose the defects, there are others whose vices it is impossible to mistake. Such are the laws that disinherit the multitude in order to enrich with their spoils a portion of the community—those that augment the pressure of natural inequalities, or take from them their only corrective, the right of every one to raise himself in his turn. Unjust in principle, such laws can only produce evil ; for in politics, as in morality, inequality is injustice, and injustice transfused into a system will infallibly introduce every species of corruption.

Religious writers ! you who fulminate the empty doctrines of ignorance and impiety, it is for you to proclaim this grand and salutary truth ; and, nevertheless, how many among you mistake or betray it ? What ! We are, say they, the creatures of a God of mercy and goodness ; and their dogmas, the bastard offspring of the sophisms of Hobbes, declare us incapable of reason, and doom us to servitude ! It is in the name of religion and morality, that they raise altars to despotism and inequality. It is to curb our vicious propensities that they desire to subject us to the degrading yoke of force, and to the disgraceful humiliations of slavery ! What inconsistency ! But no ; every thing attests that the gifts of Providence are not poisoned : no ; from an equitable distribution

of the benefits of civilization do not flow the evils which they denounce : no ; that God whom they represent as jealous and tyrannical, in leaving to societies no other means of prosperity and preservation than an equality of rights, has not disinherited the greater number, nor made a duty of iniquity to the leaders of nations.

That God's purpose in the affairs of this world is only imperfectly unveiled, is admitted ; but that purpose cannot be injustice and servitude ; and, if there be no government beyond the reach of error, is it not better, in a state of doubt, to err by granting too much to the generous principles of our nature, than to stifle them under the load of immoral and coercive institutions ?

CHAPTER XII.

ON CERTAIN MORE SPECIAL OBJECTIONS TAKEN TO THE EQUALITY OF RIGHTS.

WE must now answer the objections taken to the equality of rights, and the freedom of property ; and all of them proceed on the following assumptions. There will, it is said, be a levelling of riches, because the children of a family will equally share among them the paternal inheritance ; there will be an excess of population, because the equalizing of fortunes, turning to the advantage of the inferior classes, will increase the energy of the inclinations which lead to marriage and procreation. And what will be the evils of a social state in which the same indigence and the same

necessities will come to weigh upon a redundant population? According to some, there would follow a universal languor, the result of that ignorance which would ensue from the extinction of leisure; according to others, we should see an unbridled ambition, the result of the equality of fortunes, take hold of men's minds. The latter, consequently, dread a demagogical anarchy; the former, on the contrary, maintain, that with factitious distinctions would disappear the barriers that repel the inroads of despotism. There are, as will be seen, contradictions enow in these opinions to disclose a primary error; and, in fact, nothing is more easy than to prove that none of the consequences which they pre-suppose have been realised.

Aristotle observes, that those who speak of an equality of wealth ought not to forget to regulate the number of their children; and without doubt, there is in the single impossibility that all fathers should have the same number of children, the means of preventing not only all levelling of fortunes, but also the means of defeating all the plans, the most skilfully combined, in favour of an absolute equality. But if this single cause is sufficient to keep up great disparities in social conditions, how many others contribute to diffuse the same inequality? The difference in natural talents, powers, and tastes, the influence of accidents and events, do they not all concur to diversify the lots of individuals? Consider the spectacle that the scenes of active life present; all are on the alert to ameliorate their condition, all striving to arrive at wealth; but starting at unequal distances, marching at a pace more or less rapid, launched on different routes, how should all reach the same term? And how many accidents

still come to retard or precipitate their course ! To one, the chances of fortune suddenly cast up ; others are as suddenly struck down by the blows of adversity ; finally, without counting the disasters resulting from vice and prodigality, such is the uncertainty that impends over the destiny of families, that I believe nobody would take it upon him to answer for the rank in which any of them might be found in the third generation.

But if from unequal forces and faculties different results must necessarily follow, there is a material cause, whose continuous and progressive action will always introduce into the distribution of wealth sufficient inequality. I allude to the power of attraction and accumulation inherent in great capitals,—a power so great that, betwixt individuals pursuing the same career, all the advantages, merit being equal, will naturally tend to the side of the rich ; in fact, as in all speculations the rate of profits depends on the degree of competition, it follows that all those that demand the greatest advances offer profits higher in proportion, as there are fewer persons in a situation to undertake them. This circumstance is eminently favourable to the most wealthy persons. Do they desire to invest their savings ? The absence of competition offers to them, at a cheaper rate, lands, houses, forests, factories, of the highest value. Do they incline to speculate on some product in public loans, in lucrative contracts ? The amount of profit is proportionate to the quantity of capital they can embark. Water always goes to the river, as is with reason observed by the common people, struck with the chances of fortune which are always presented to the

rich ; and, in fact, every thing tends to promote their interests. To facilities common to all, they join the advantages, which in numerous cases amount to a sort of monopoly, the profits of which increase in the ratio of their wealth. To the operation of this cause add the possibility of making, without derogating in any respect from the usages of society, savings proportionate to the amount of their revenues ; take into view also the influence of marriages almost always calculated on equal conditions of fortune ; and, far from dreading the equalization of heritages and property, you will conceive that to counterbalance the action of the tendencies which provoke their accumulation, the influence is not sufficient of those dissipating tendencies which the vanity of rank and the satiety of riches usually nourish.

I am unable to say with whom originated the extravagant notion, that riches naturally tend to break down and level themselves, for there are few facts more generally disproved. In all places where the laws fortified the action of the tendency towards inequality, we saw immense fortunes rise up in the midst of general misery : wherever, on the contrary, men tried to maintain an equality of conditions, their efforts were fruitless : and the laws of Sparta, as well as those of the Hebrew lawgiver, gave way before the increasing force of the tendencies inseparable from the social state. What I imagine to have misled aristocratic writers is, that, taking for dispositions natural to all what was only the result of the prejudices peculiar to the order of nobility, they did not doubt that, once in a situation to satisfy the wants of existence, men would disdain to increase their well-being by a painful and

repulsive toil. Nothing is more contrary to fact than this opinion. If it had been given to the human species to be able to bound its desires in the matter of riches, if it could content itself with a limited portion of them, there is a point at which human societies would have halted; and from the day in which famine had ceased to press them, they would not have made a single step onward towards civilization. But far from that, to every advantage acquired they have gone on adding another;—animated by the desire of bettering their condition, urged on by a thirst after distinctions and enjoyments, individuals have combined and realised all the improvements of which the state of knowledge rendered the arts susceptible; and their active ambition drew the masses from misery and barbarism to raise them to a higher degree of glory and prosperity. Of men who desired nothing beyond their bare nourishment, history has furnished no example of so singular a phenomenon; the enchantments of Circe, as the poet tells us, were required to produce this effect on the companions of Ulysses. Besides, there have been people among whom their chiefs made an equal division of the territory; there have been others where the laws tried to maintain the relations of existing fortunes; and the result in both cases teaches us what invincible force resides in the principle of inequality.

Scarcely were the cities of Greece built than the inequality of fortunes became excessive. Property was only in its infancy, and already it had passed into the hands of so small a number, that their Lycurguses and Solons saw no other means of preserving the people from slavery than the cancelling of debts, and

the enacting of laws regulating the extent of patrimonies. In Rome, two centuries were sufficient to overturn all the primitive relations of fortune. Among the Jews, whose institutions were, of all people we know, the most rigidly framed to ensure an equal division, neither the right of gleaning, nor the year of the Sabbath, nor religious and festival alms, could restrain the torrent of inequality. In vain did the Jubilee, an expedient more singular still than the German allocations, in annulling every fifty years individual appropriations, restore to each family its original lot. Singular result! It always happened that, in the face of a law so opposed to the circulation of property, so short a space of time was sufficient not only to unite several properties in the hands of a small number, but even to leave to the bulk of individuals destitute of the means of paying their debts, no other resource than the sacrifice of their personal liberty. Now, I ask, after the example of such facts, amongst a poor people, strangers to the arts and commerce, without any other industry than the culture of an ungrateful soil, is it not the height of absurdity to fear the equalization of fortunes in old Europe, so rich in experience and lights, where the multiplied wants of a refined civilization occupy so many hands, require labours so various, and class men so unequally? But are men ignorant of the fact, that so long as it will be more difficult to be a good advocate or physician than a good carpenter or smith, the first will always be better paid than the other; that in every branch of industry an unequal aptitude will draw after it unequal remuneration; that in offices which require high talents, great fortunes will always be made; and that

to the advantages attached to birth, the children of the rich will always add those which a superiority of education and intelligence confer ?

Further,—modern Europe has also made the experiment of an equal division in successions ; and the palaces of Genoa and Florence remain to attest in how small a degree wealth had a tendency to level itself in these republics. Berne, Zurich, Hamburgh, and various other countries, have they not always had rich and poor in their populations ? Finally, were the fortunes of the noble caste seen to tend towards equality in that same Poland where the allodial system prevailed ? What country, on the contrary, offers so marked a contrast ? Whilst in the Diets, the Potokis, the Radzivils, the Czartoriskis displayed a magnificence absolutely regal, it was barefooted, and with their scythes in their hands, that thousands of nobles, too poor to keep a horse and purchase arms, came to declare their wants and give their votes.

To sum up all,—under an equality of rights, there is less change in the relative amount of fortunes than in the spirit that presides over the use of them. If institutions cease to favour an unjust inequality, they, in return, leave much more room for the action of natural causes. Virtue, talents, natural capacity, endowed with a greater energy, obtain ampler rewards ; and their action suffices for maintaining in ranks and conditions all the diversity that is desirable.

To prove how chimerical are the fears about the levelling of fortunes, which no human power could effect, would be to refute beforehand the assertions thrown forward on the subject of an excess in the population : still, as some have greatly insisted on this

point, and as it involves several important questions, I shall examine it here.

And I shall, first of all, concede, that every return which society makes towards an equality of rights commences by augmenting the population. All that the new law then takes from the privileged classes and restores to circulation, by widening the field of labour, and the remuneration assigned to the active classes, the latter develop themselves with an energy proportionate to the means of action and well-being which they have recovered. In France neither the evils of anarchy, nor the devastations of war, nor the blood shed on so many fields of battle, could destroy the benefits resulting from the Revolution, which replaced under the common law the property formerly destined to nourish the slothful inmates of the convents, and the pampered minions of great houses. But however rapid its effects may be at the outset, such a movement abates and relaxes in proportion as the new order of things is strengthened, and as the room which it has made is filled up. People do not augment their numbers blindly; and although the most flourishing nations are always the most numerous, it is without experiencing any of the inconveniences inherent in an excess of the population that they draw closer together on the soil which nourishes them. Far from comfort encouraging the tendency to increase the species, the lights, which are its accompaniments, serve as a corrective; and the farther the individual recedes from the condition of a mere operative, the less he is inclined to abandon himself to that impulse.

Why does the hireling operative blindly give himself up to the propagation of his kind? It is because

the sentiment the most painful to a father, the fear of leaving children worse provided for than himself, does not affect him. His sons will live as he has lived ; like him they will run the risks of poverty ; like him, they will, at need, beg their bread from pity : but these trials, he has undergone them, he has surmounted them, he feels strong and healthy, and work does not fail : why should not his children get through life in the same manner as he has done ?

Comfort, on the contrary, inspires different feelings ; with new modes of enjoyment, it brings with it new tastes, other inclinations. The existence which it creates, is more agreeable, but more precarious ; a man feels that he may fall from his condition, and consequently carries more prudence and circumspection into his conduct.

There is in this respect, betwixt the mere operative and him with a small capital, a greater distance than betwixt the latter and the members of the higher classes. As soon as a man reaches the point at which he is able to make some steps towards fortune, and to throw on the future a look animated by the hope of ameliorating his condition, the desire of reaching the object in view becomes the director of his actions, and acts as a check on his natural inclinations for marriage.

The ambitious man, it has been remarked, rarely marries ; he fears to embarrass himself with domestic cares ; but among those to whom the road to fortune is open, has not every one his little views of ambition, which suggest to him the inconveniences of early unions ? Does not every one know the obstacles which too numerous a family created to the increase of his well-being ? Besides, in such matters facts are more conclusive than arguments.

See if it be not among the higher classes that we find the greatest number of bachelors. How many young men wait until a fortune has been assured to them before they marry, and who see years gather over their heads more quickly than their coffers are filled ! How many women without dowries prefer celibacy to marriage with a husband whose indigence or want of education might render the connexion unhappy ? Is it not plain, that it is upon the middle classes that operate most powerfully those notions in favour of a voluntary continence so much recommended by Malthus as the only means of not rendering the sweetest relations of life a continual cause of alarms and bitterness ? Let an individual of any class be able to aspire to a higher rank, the desire of reaching it will inspire him with the ideas of prudence and forethought requisite for restraining the action of the procreating principle.

Besides, whatever may have been said to the contrary, that principle is not a brute impulse, without any other curb than material obstacles. In all states of civilization, its action is regulated, limited, and precipitated by moral causes. It has been said to be mathematically proved, that the human species could double itself in fourteen years ; and I do not deny that the thing may be physically possible : perhaps even the rapid increase of the people in the United States of America is a proof of it. But an exceptional case cannot be adduced as a proof of such a result ; and can we conclude in regard to old Europe, from what has taken place in the midst of a nation, applying to a virgin soil the arts and the means of industry, borrowed from a civilization developed under another sky ? If every theory must be grounded on facts, why not

refer to those which are the most general and decisive? Why should we not judge the law of population by the results presented by its action in our old societies? As for myself, I conceive, that the whole question appears to consist in finding out if, in the order of the progress of civilization, men increase faster than the means of subsistence. But taking as the point of comparison the present condition of the population of Europe, I inquire, if, when France, Germany, and England were at once poorer and less densely peopled than at the present time; if during the 10th, 12th, or 13th centuries, men more thinly scattered, were they less miserable, and I find the contrary to have been the case. Starting from tribes of hunters, scattered over an immense surface, and coming down to the compact masses of people crowded together on the soil of Europe, I remark a gradual amelioration in the condition of individuals; I observe, that if in all times the population seems to press against the limits of its subsistence, not only do civilized nations have more ample resources against the scarcity which too often befalls savage hordes, but are also more amply provided with the enjoyments furnished by manufacturing industry. Do we still desire to compare the degrees of individual comfort among nations that have made an unequal degree of progress in industry and population, we shall find, that the superiority is always on the side of the most advanced. Thus, in the populous districts of Holland, the day labourer and artisan consume yearly the means of well-being, which would suffice for the support of two or three Bavarian peasants, and which would undoubtedly content seven or eight Muscovite serfs. Thus, the farm servant in Scotland is not only

better fed than the Polish villager, but expends in clothes alone a sum equal to the entire consumption of the latter. Such are the facts. Amidst all the vicissitudes of the social state, the masses have been continually making way; and if the formidable activity of the principle of population has rendered them more numerous, the progress of knowledge and industry has amassed the treasures, whose diffusion has more than counterbalanced the inconveniences of their increase. Without doubt there are countries where a faulty distribution of wealth conceals this result; but look more narrowly, and you will see, that this has arisen from the privileged classes having absorbed the means, of which a more equitable partition would have ameliorated the condition of the community at large.

The fact above noticed is one of vast importance, in as far as it overthrows all the doctrines which suppose that the energy of the populating principle increases in an equal ratio with the productive power of nations. If it were so, what, at the present day, would be the state of European countries? According as a progressive industry would have added to the means of well-being, new consumers would arrive to devour the fruits of the new improvements; and men, agglomerated upon a soil rendered fertile by their labours, would have continued to crouch under the indestructible chain of want and misery.

What do we see, on the contrary? Every where shining examples of the augmentation of wealth and comfort; every where the proof that, far from multiplying as fast as the creations of industry—that, far from passing over the earth to reproduce exactly what they consume, men appear on its surface to con-

tribute to the common stock of well-being more than they destroy during their lives, and prepare for their descendants an existence gradually ameliorated by the accumulation of capital and the means of production.

What can be opposed to so noble a result? Of what use is it to speak of a latent energy, of an occult power, of a tendency which is dormant; or which, only acting under the influence of a growing reason, does not produce any of the effects attributed to it? Is it not better to avow, that if the human race, in virtue of its organization, is capable of multiplying itself rapidly, the progress of intelligence and reason add to the physical obstacles which at the outset checked population, a moral restraint sufficiently powerful to cause the balance of wealth to incline more and more to the side that is favourable to human happiness?

Such, moreover, is the opinion of a man who will not be suspected of having looked only at the bright side of human affairs, or of having encouraged the multiplication of the species. In modern Europe, says Malthus, destructive obstacles have less force, and privative obstacles have more than they formerly had, for checking the population, and than they ever had amongst a people who made little progress in civilization: which clearly means, that ignorant and rude nations are the most exposed to famines and destructive calamities; whilst populous and civilized nations, less improvident, restrict themselves more severely to the observance of a prudent continence; in other words, that flourishing and enlightened nations, calculating for the future, confine themselves more exactly to their resources. But this observation, deduced from an examination of facts, fully confirms what I have advanced,

namely that, governed by ideas and sentiments emanating from civilization, men do not multiply in proportion to the increase of the produce of their industry—a fact from which we may infer, that all multiplication being a sign of present prosperity, is also, thanks to the progress of the general continence, a progress determined by the action even of the causes of development, the pledge of a still greater future prosperity.

Further, I say it advisedly, in regard to the natural multiplication of the species, that if by the effect of accidental legislative improvements or of temporary conquests, it sometimes happens, from a confident use being made of the resources acquired by force, and which force takes back again, redundant populations have only found their level at the cost of numberless calamities, these circumstances, the fruit of an improvident policy, are not a wrong of nature, they are exceptions owing sometimes to the ephemeral success of political ambition, at other times to the victories of those daring monarchs who, contriving a plan of aggrandizement suited to their own genius and not to the fundamental basis of their power, elevate a nation on a sudden, only to allow it to fall back exhausted below the point from which they had taken it. Such would be, in case of maritime reverses, the destiny of Great Britain. Such was the fate of Sweden after Charles XII. Such was the more frightful fate of Spain after Philip II. Unsuccessful in war, the Spanish nation fell under the yoke of the monks of the Inquisition, of royal despotism, and of laws as absurd as they were injurious to the industry of the people. Stripped of the means of action, to which it

owed its grandeur, it was forced to fall back, borne down by a load of evils and sufferings. In the above we see some of the casualties which surprise nations, and throw them back into a state of misery and depopulation; but even in these cases, we must avoid attributing the evils to an excessive multiplication of the species; for it would be easy to prove, that at the time when the people were most numerous they were always most rich and happy.

Besides, there are facts at hand to exculpate nations from the imprudence with which they have been taxed. After the plague of 1720 had ceased to ravage Provence, the marriages, as Messance remarks, were more prolific than formerly. In Prussia, after the plague, which in 1710 carried off a third of the population, the number of annual births, which up to that time had been 26,000, amounted in 1711 to 32,000. "Who would not have thought," observes Say, "that after such a terrible ravage the number of marriages at least would have diminished? In place of that, the number was doubled, so great is the tendency of population to raise itself to the level of the resources of a country." These examples at least attest the force of the opinions which combat the desire of marriage in ordinary times; they show what confidence we ought to put in individual prudence; and that if the power of multiplying is always the same, considered abstractedly, men know at least how to subject it to the empire of circumstances.

In general, too much uneasiness is felt as to the result of natural tendencies; and, for the most part, men think themselves called on to repress or restrain them. Like those spoilt children of fortune who,

having no real ills, create for themselves imaginary ones, there are men whom the sight of the wonders of civilization only fill with gloomy and despondent ideas. To listen to them, the human species rushes blindly towards inevitable ruin ; one tells us that knowledge corrupts the heart, and that the perfection of reason leads to its aberration ; others, grounding their fears on physical causes, predict the exhaustion of fuel—the extinction of the solar heat—the parching up of the globe—and how many more things than I know—for who can enumerate the vagaries of the human mind ? Ah, let us have more faith in the benevolence of the Creator. Would he permit human reason to enlighten itself, and to approach by a slow progress the goal of truth—would he allow societies to increase progressively in numbers and in wealth—in a word, would he have imparted to man the gift of perfectibility, if, as a last result of his pains and his labours, the human race were only fated to turn in a circle of errors and miseries, not more diversified than painful and afflictive ? Certainly, there is no absolute felicity on the earth ; but in sight of the manifold testimonies which we receive of the goodness of Providence, can we believe mankind so prostrated by the vices of their nature, that there is no possible means of repressing their outbreak, or correcting the evils which flow from them ? An attentive examination of facts gives birth to nobler ideas. Reasoning from them, we are taught that if the people become depraved under bad institutions, they improve under good ; and that if the justice of the laws produces immense benefits, it also inspires the wisdom and self-control which assure the increase and the preservation of them.

After having refuted the fundamental objections of the partisans of inequality, and proved that the abolition of privileges would bring with it neither a leveling of fortunes nor an excess of population, it remains for me to point out the principal results of an equality of rights, and to show its sufficiency for answering all the ends of a perfect civilization.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF AN EQUALITY OF RIGHTS ON THE MORAL CONDITION OF A PEOPLE.

BEFORE governments were established, social order only reposed on the identity of affections, inclinations, and moral instincts with which men are endowed by nature. Friends of justice, all iniquitous acts are odious to them ; they pursue with their contempt and indignation all those who are guilty of them ; and the terror occasioned by these decrees of opinion supplying the want of coactive institutions, is sufficient to maintain in the relations betwixt individuals general peace and harmony. In proportion as civilization advances, multiplied and complex interests, and duties little distinguishable, call for the intervention of positive laws ; but, far from rendering opinion null, these laws are only the expressions of it, derive from it their force, and remain subject to its influence.

Opinion or social reason is, unfortunately, not infallible ; the irregularities and vices of individuals, the prejudices and errors of nations, are the proofs of this ;

but whatever its aberrations may be, flowing as it does from the moral fund prepared by Providence for the establishment and progress of civil life, never did opinion entirely belie its origin, and its injunctions always produce in the end more good than evil. If it were otherwise, all society would be impossible: in order to its existence, it requires that its members make reciprocal concessions to each other; in a word, that a principle of equity preside over their relations. So necessary is this, that without a certain law of honour to prevent mutual treachery among them, not even a band of robbers could be formed.

But if there are boundaries that opinion cannot pass, its power even makes of its errors the source of the greater part of the evils which afflict society. On the one hand, it is always to national prejudices and to false notions of order and duty that must be attributed the vices and iniquities of legislation; on the other, there lies beyond the domain or scope of the laws a vast field, in which men, walking solely by the light of the torch of opinion, miss their way as often as it gives forth a dubious or deceptive light. What is more, over laws whose power is simply privative, opinion, decreeing both the praise and the blame, exercises an ever active influence; if modes of conduct or life are disapproved by it, men abandon them; those which it approves are eagerly pursued; the qualities which it holds in honour, men endeavour to acquire; they respect even the prejudices which it establishes: finally, the soul of society, the prime rule of individuals, there is no department of social life which opinion does not regulate; and according as it is composed of notions more or less just—that is, more or less conformable to

morality and the general interests—this queen of the world imprints on the acts of power, as on those of private life, a direction more or less productive of social happiness.

As often as there is question of the mistakes or infirmity of opinion, the blame is laid on public ignorance, and not without reason. Ignorance, in fact, judges by appearances, and too often approves what a more careful examination would lead us to condemn. In that case it is not the instinct of good that misleads us, it is the weakness of our faculties which deprives us of the materials necessary for a just exercise of them ; so in proportion as these materials are acquired, men ~~rectify~~ the rules which their previous carelessness had led them to subscribe to. This result never fails to be realised. Truth once unveiled, never makes a vain appeal to the conscience of man ; and as knowledge tends gradually to develop itself, public morality finds no friend obstacle to its progressive purification than the artificial causes which falsify the judgment and the reason of a people.

Of these causes the most general and powerful belong undeniably to the differences in the points of view, under which unequal conditions and distinct modes of action present things to the several members of the community.

On this head Adam Smith observes ("Theory of Moral Sentiments"), that two opposite systems of morality, the one more lax, and the other more severe, usually govern the higher and the lower classes. How indeed should they judge in an uniform manner actions whose consequences have a different effect both on their moral and material interests ? How should not

a number of irregularities, severely blamed by the families whose happiness and peace are injured by them, find more indulgence in a sphere in which opulence protects men from all their inconveniences? Search all the ranks of society, and you will find them subjected to rules as distinct and various as the condition of individuals. Thus, in the circles of fashion, where persons are actuated by the desire of escaping from the ennui of an unoccupied and listless existence, the qualities principally sought after are sprightliness, easy and elegant manners, and the arts of conversation, while more sterling qualities are made little account of; perhaps even there is no better title to be well received than a certain sprinkling of immorality, which, making light of vulgar observances, gives a more pungent and original air to the monotonous details of life.

Pass from thence to the classes whose easy circumstances are the fruits of an active industry: more rigid opinions are found to prevail. Men know what misfortunes dissipation and prodigality lead to: the business of the world has taught the value to be set upon order, and fidelity to engagements: probity, economy, and industry, are the qualities in request; and the most agreeable talents, the most captivating manners, afford no protection from the contempt that awaits the absence of such qualities.

Lower still in society, prevail other moral laws suited to other interests; virtues that have no place in the higher classes attract esteem; habits, whose rudeness is revolting to good society, are not even the subjects of blame. Every thing is there measured by the vulgar standard of the strictest utility.

Such is the influence of the inequality of conditions,

of interest, and modes of existence. So long as this inequality subsists artificially, distinct and often opposite opinions, rarely conformable to the general interests, guide every portion of the community; and from a want of uniformity and harmony, public censure restrains very imperfectly the passions whose outbreaks trouble the order and peace of families.

The more distance there is betwixt ranks, the greater diversity there is in the elements constituting opinion, and the more is it weakened and perverted. It is more particularly under the regime of privilege that the injustice of the relations established between the various classes isolates them, and contaminates public morals. Milton has said, that there is no society unless among equals; that is to say, there are no rules in common, no reciprocal kindness, sympathy, or benevolence, in their connexion with each other. By separating ranks, privilege makes of every class a world apart; and if interest obliges the humble to defer to their superiors, the latter, free from all similar restraint, brave with impunity the opinion of the world. What signifies to the Russian magnate, for example, the attachment or the hatred of the serfs, whom he believes to be of a different nature from himself? Society, to him, is the narrow circle of his equals; and provided he discharges his trifling duties to the latter, the cries of the wretches whom he grinds down will neither disturb his enjoyments, nor tarnish his reputation. Look at a slave-owner, a planter in the Antilles; a good husband and father, humane towards the whites, does he believe that he owes anything to the wretched beings whose sweat enriches him? Do not talk to him of the sufferings which they endure, still less of

their rights: he will cut all your arguments short, by proving to you that blacks form no part of the human family. Ask the great of every country, in what perfect order consists; and they will name to you that order in which their privileges are safe, in which their ruling passions, the offspring of the pride of rank and fortune, have an easy triumph over the common rules and injunctions of morality.

Does the influence of the discordant interests which privilege nourished sow hatred between individuals? Perhaps betwixt equals there will exist some approach to the rules of fairness and honesty, but in their treatment of the inferior classes all the duties of morality and equity will be trampled under foot.

This is what was seen to happen in the republics of Italy during the struggles betwixt the nobles and the plebeians. So great was the corruption of manners, that the most revolting injustice was a title to consideration among the classes whose passions and interests it ministered to. In France, it was amidst the applauses of the middle class that Louis XI. consigned to the executioner the great of his kingdom. At Venice, the empire of political distinctions had so completely banished from men's hearts the natural feelings of morality and humanity, that the famous Sarpi dared to trace the following rules for the government: "In the quarrels between the nobles and the plebeians, always find the nobles in the right. In regard to the Greeks, treat them as wild beasts, whose claws must be pared, and their teeth drawn; deal them bread and blows, and keep your humanity for their betters." It would be easy to cite many other examples in point. All the nations of Europe having undergone

the influence of privilege, all have had to struggle against the prejudices and the corruption inherent in an inequality of rights and conditions. Finally, it may be said, that if under the feudal regime there were nobles, burghers, and serfs, there were not men ; and that neither the obligations imposed by that primitive title, nor the sentiments which it ought to inspire, had any hold of individuals in their relations with each other.

Without doubt, the progress of knowledge tends to bring men back to sounder and more generous ideas ; let us not, however, be taken in on this point ! So long as an unjust inequality builds upon the misery and the oppression of the masses, the grandeur of the smaller number, pride on the one side, and debasement and jealousy on the other, breed doctrines contrary to, and in opposition with, the views of reason and morality. To no purpose, then, will you preach to the noble an esteem for industry, a respect for the virtues and the rights of the plebeians : born to opulence, considering idleness as the characteristic attribute of his race, he sees nothing but a sign of meanness in the exercise of the lucrative professions ; and his prejudices have an influence even over the minds of the classes devoted to toil ; never will he be seen to recognise in the poor man a brother invested with powerful claims to kindness and consideration. In his eyes, the poor man is only what the law has made him, a being destined to serve and obey. Scorn extinguishes in him all sympathy for the afflictions of the other ; the insults to which he knows him to be exposed do not excite the indignation of the rich ; and however sensible he may be to the pains of his equals, it is without remorse or

pity, that he presses down the yoke, under whose crushing weight the poor and unfortunate groan and suffer.

Among a people where privilege separates classes, if knowledge become the portion of the smaller number, it remains nearly without influence on the manners. Observe what disparities exist in the moral condition of the nations of Europe; and still there is not one of them that does not possess at least some statesmen capable of rivalling in knowledge and accomplishments the *élite* of the countries the most advanced in these respects. At Naples, as at Madrid, there are found good writers, poets, scholars, artists, and even philosophers; but does the influence of such men dissipate national prejudices? does it prevent the Neapolitan from speculating on the beauty of his wife or his daughters; or the Spaniard from preferring to some industrial pursuit, the object of public contempt, the humiliations of mendicity? does it hinder a disgraceful superstition from blasting the germs of morality and public happiness?

It was at the time when the fine arts took in Italy the widest and most noble extension, that Machiavel wrote the book of the *Prince*, and reduced into a system the iniquities which the greater number of contemporary princes habitually practised.

We know also what an astonishing union of men of genius lived under the long reign of Louis XIV. Never did the different branches of literature and the fine arts possess more illustrious representatives; above all, never did more eloquent voices preach to the great of the world the benign and humanizing maxims of the Gospel; but alas! were the moral and political doctrines of the times more equitable and benevolent?

were the people less trampled on? were religious persecutions less rigorous and cruel? did the monarch believe himself less entitled to sacrifice to his pride and ambition, the lives, liberties, and the wealth of his subjects? It was in that age so vaunted of, that statesmen erected into a maxim of policy, That it was better to tax the people heavily than to leave them too much at their ease, because abundance made them restive and independent.

Such was the influence of this political dogma, that under the regency, the celebrated Count Boulainvilliers wrote, on the subject of the memorials which M. de Fougères and others had presented on the means of remedying the disorders in the finances: "All the authors of these memorials are agreed in principle, that it is as dangerous to leave the people too much at their ease, as it is grievous to see them deeply distressed. This was the first reflection made by the late Prince de Conti, on the project of Mareschal Vauban for establishing a royal tithe; and it is in fact proper that the lower classes feel the necessity of obedience, and that they do not become too much used to prosperity and its enjoyments, lest they should regard themselves as independent." And do not tax this sentiment over much with injustice and cruelty, seeing that it is only the natural result of the pride of rule—only a prejudice, excusable, perhaps, by the degradation of the laborious classes.

But do we not hear it exclaimed on all sides, "Knock off the fetters of the slave, and he will turn against you his strength and his liberty?" We cannot deny that there is some truth in this warning; but if there are precautions to be observed in regard to such

unfortunates, justly irritated against social order, is it the less clear that they have a right to good treatment, and that a small share of comfort, by improving the manners and the intelligence of the suffering classes, is ever found to be the best sedative to their seditious propensities ?

I have now, I presume, said enough, and perhaps more than enough, to prove what obstacles privilege raises up to the formation of a moral, energetic, and pure law in society. Each class naturally judging things according to their connexion with its private interests, it follows that the lights in which they are viewed are as numerous as are the classes, and the maxims as various as are their rules of conduct ; hence the falsity of all of them. Is one of them indebted to the partiality of the laws for a noxious and immutable superiority ? Indulgent towards the passions whose action preserves them from the painful languor of idleness, it is for the usages, manners, labours, and virtues of the inferior orders that this class reserves its insolent disdain. Others, in their turn, only make account of the talents and habits which smooth the road to wealth ; others still, victims of the iniquity of the institutions, believe themselves entitled to have recourse to frauds and depredations, which only injure the wealthy ; and from the mixture of so many discordant principles and sentiments, of so many erroneous or vicious interests and judgments, there is bred a public opinion too much wanting in firmness, congruity, and fixity, to keep the masses under a wholesome and tutelary subjection.

This influence of situations and interests being well understood, it becomes easy to appreciate the bearing of

the changes which the triumph of the equality of rights will operate on society. Before this new regime, will finally fall down the barriers raised betwixt the classes; there will be no longer privileged conditions, nor factitious distinctions, nor dominating castes, nor fortunes protected against the irregularities of their possessors; and thenceforth, the soil which nourished them will be wanting to those exclusive opinions and selfish interests, the shock of which weakened and depraved the spirit of society. Subjected to uniform and just laws, men of all conditions will be exposed to the same chances of ruin or aggrandizement. It will only be by following the same road, by displaying talents and virtues of the same kind, that individuals will prosper; and from a similarity in the modes of activity, will spring a similarity of principles and maxims of conduct. Without doubt, the inequality of riches will always keep up some diversity in the judgments of men; but if the same reproach does not strike the errors whose consequences are not equally mischievous to all, at least we shall no longer see these differences of opinion go so far as to relieve any one from the duties of probity.

There is much in this unanimity of opinions; but there is still more to be said.

In founding social existences on the principles of equity, an equality of rights would produce interests and opinions the most favourable to the well-being of all. In this new order of things, individuals having no means of distinction out of the circle of the arts, commerce, or manufactures, there would be a necessity for their contracting the habits and the manners which labour imparts. To the eyes of all would become

apparent the advantages of activity, industry, and economy: indispensable to the poor for reaching a state of comfort, these virtues will preserve all their value in the eyes of the rich, who will be indebted to them for the increase or preservation of an acquired superiority; and in all ranks men will vie with each other in eulogizing them. Thence, consideration will attend the man, whose actions testify that he respects them; contempt will be attached to the idle and profuse; every one will dread lest a state of inoccupation may fix upon him the stigma of sloth or incapacity; and these opinions becoming stronger, will finally prescribe the rules whose adoption will multiply more and more the blessings of industry and civilization.

Since a middle class has existed in Europe, it has always been observed to surpass in intelligence and prudence the rest of society. The reason of this is plain:—out of the reach of the seductions of luxury and sloth, uniting to the advantages of education the lessons of an active and laborious life, these classes learn to use with moderation the wealth earned by long and laborious efforts and sacrifices. Under an equality of rights, such are the manners which will infallibly become the portion of the community at large. In leaving to private ambition no other resource than the exercise of the industrial faculties,—to fortune, no other means of prosperity than labour, order, and temperance,—in finally placing all individuals in a still better situation than were formerly the middle classes,—this regime will infallibly diffuse the virtues and the principles to which the latter owed their superiority; and society at large will advance with rapid and sure strides in the paths of justice and utility.

It would be easy to enumerate all the advantages attached to the purification of the moral law ; but what would it avail to enlarge on the power of opinion ? Who does not know that there is no department of the social economy which escapes its influence ; and that it is as omnipotent over rulers as private individuals ? Let it suffice, therefore, to have pointed out the principal results which in this respect follow from an equality of rights, and to have made it apparent, that if privilege, in diversifying, classifying, and dividing existences and modes of activity, creates interests whose empire falsifies or perverts the natural instincts of conscience, a regime founded on the austere principles of justice, in giving to conditions of life analogous bases, must purify the elements whose fusion forms opinion, and impress on that sovereign of the world a direction so much the more strong and beneficial, as it will be more enlightened, unanimous, and agreeable to the interests of all.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE BEST SYSTEM OF ORGANIZATION UNDER AN EQUALITY OF RIGHTS.

WHATEVER the state of civilization may be, as there always exists much inequality in private conditions, we do not find amongst individuals either the same motives of attachment to established order, or the same intelligence.

On this head, Hobbes observes, " When a man feels at his ease, and nothing hinders him from becoming

still more so, it is impossible that he should desire a change." A small share of comfort, the possibility of increasing it, a fear of events that may compromise it, such have been in all times the causes that have given rise to a protective authority ; and it is with reason that we consider all the classes possessing the advantages of wealth, as directly interested in the maintenance of government and the stability of the state.

Perhaps we exaggerate the influence of those envious and sullen feelings, which tend to make the poorer orders brood over and repine at their painful and often humiliating condition ; but if the danger from these is only rarely felt, it is at least clear, that in believing themselves to have nothing to fear from social commotions, these classes offer a greater hold to the passions whose turbulence causes an explosion. So, in every society are mingled together, and co-exist, tendencies unequally conducive to good order,—or, if you will, *defensive* and *aggressive* tendencies :—to weaken the latter, and strengthen the former, is the object of government ; and the goodness of their organization will always be measured by the degree of success which they may attain in these respects.

That governments owe their origin to the necessity of guarantees for the rights of labour and property ; that in all subsequent periods they have been aided by the support of men in possession of advantages, which the weakening of the sovereign power would have exposed to the assaults of violence or dishonesty, is a fact that requires no proof. From the most ancient times, the rich have perceived how the support of the laws was indispensable to the protection of their persons and property ; thus did they ever coalesce to hold

in check the ignorant and needy classes ; and, profiting by an incontestable superiority, we have seen them almost always go beyond the prescribed end, and impose on the multitude the yoke of slavery.

Nevertheless, we ought not to believe that it is sufficient for government to protect the rights of property, in order to obtain the support of the more elevated classes. These classes have ulterior wants, the neglect of which may detach them from power, change into hatred their natural tendencies, and give to the offensive forces a formidable ascendancy. But such wants, varying according to circumstances, still flow from the two following causes : first, from the interests developed by the progress of industry ; secondly, from the intellectual and moral notions accruing from the increase of public intelligence.

Men naturally look forward to the enjoyment of their rights of property in all their plenitude imaginable. Accustomed in private life to grant nothing except in exchange for articles of value or useful services, they gradually carry the same ideas into their relations with the state. Are unwonted sacrifices imposed on them, they insist that the urgency of them should be made apparent ; they exclaim against the rapacity of governments, and it becomes more and more difficult to subject them to taxes to which they have not consented. Add to that, the imperfections with which a change of circumstances affects institutions ;—new interests are found deprived of guarantees ; sometimes a commercial regulation arrests the extension of a branch of trade ; at other times, civil laws impede the circulation of capital ; sometimes, it is the mode or incidence of taxation that produce a train of

inconveniences ;—all, in fine, unite to induce them to seek in a participation in the right of legislation, a protection against the partiality, the ignorance, or the encroachments of power.

It is the same with the progress of intelligence. True, it is more easy to rule a rude and ignorant multitude than an enlightened and flourishing population ; but other means are necessary. It is with the enlightened man as with the rich man. As the latter becomes more sensible of physical privations, the other is more alive to the imperfections of the social state. Impelled by a patriotism whose ardour increases in proportion as he becomes capable of forming sound opinions upon the acts of power, and their influence on his own interests, he watches with a jealous eye the march of rulers ; he feels indignant at being made the sport of their selfish passions ; he becomes irritated by their faults and errors ; and avails himself of every opportunity to rein them in. Such has been in all ages the tendency of classes the most interested in the maintenance of good order. We constantly see them demanding political rights, and rising up against the obstacles opposed to the attainment of that desire.

Under an equality of rights, as under all imaginable forms of society, subsist, in all their activity, the causes whose influence tends to produce an unequal division of fortunes and conditions. There are, therefore, rich and poor,—men well informed, and others ignorant,—some interested in the maintenance of good order, and others accessible to the anti-social passions. The first are the natural defenders of government ; in possession of wealth and intelligence, feeling the constant need of the protection of an authority conservative of the rights

of property, nothing is wanting to stimulate in them a zeal dictated by powerful interests, but to grant them the political rights which the state of civilization has made a real necessity.

Thus is it to real superiority—to a selection from all those who enjoy a happy existence, that reason desires to see delegated the powers necessary for the protection of public liberties, as well as the administration of common interests.

This principle once established, let us see how we would apply it in order that only salutary consequences may result from it.

Here several considerations claim our attention. Although it is easy to prove that all the members of a community are positively interested in maintaining the security of persons and property, it is not thus that things present themselves to the eyes of men. Individuals scarcely raised above the reach of want, do not regard with the same eye as the rich the dangers of revolution. Having little to lose, deprived besides of the benefits of a solid and liberal education, they may, in certain circumstances, allow themselves to be seduced by the hope of deriving advantage from such changes; and thence arises the necessity of not granting them too great an ascendancy over the government. Nor is the supremacy of riches any more exempted from inconveniences. If opulence presupposes the love of order, it is without implying the superiority of intelligence; on the contrary, ambitious tendencies and selfish views are very ordinarily the fruit of a too elevated situation; and experience proves only too well the danger of abandoning the reins of power to a small number. Care ought, therefore, to be taken, in a good

political system, to prevent the balance from inclining in favour of any class whatever. Such should be the object of the conditions imposed on the exercise of political rights; they ought, in all cases, to be fixed in a manner so as to call to power men capable of making a proper use of them, and none beside.

Another point to consider, is the importance of the interests to be confided to each power. According to that importance the conditions ought to vary. Is the question, for example, to fix the right of electing deputies to the legislative body? This right, the most important of any, inasmuch as on its exercise depends the management of public affairs, cannot be entrusted except to men whose situation supposes independence and intelligence. Is the question as to the choosing of members of a departmental council? There is not the like necessity for requiring so strong a guarantee, seeing the inferior moment of the interests to be decided on. A similar diminution will hold relative to the right of composing the council of an *arrondissement*; and in regard to the right of choosing communal councils, it would be unjust to refuse the smallest proprietors the right to vote. Here is set forth the principle which ought to regulate the distribution of the different powers, whose action extends to all the interests of the social body,—That in each sphere the guarantees exacted from individuals be subordinated to the degree of intelligence and prudence necessary for the due administration of the interests which they embrace; that, starting with the smallest interests, those of the communes, and ascending to the greatest, those of the state, to the most interested and capable should ever be confided the care of providing for their exigencies, in

order that the government may possess all the strength and stability requisite.

Here I do not prejudge any thing in regard to these same conditions : we may differ in opinion as to the dimensions of the circle, and wish to see it extended or confined. On this matter we ought to be regulated by circumstances, and it is the part of wisdom to attend to what they prescribe. Let us not, however, forget, with regard to the perils of democracy, the dangers not less real of concentration ; and that inasmuch as it would be imprudent to commit the destinies of society to the ignorant and miserable classes, in so much would it be unjust to reject existing capacities. For my part, were I obliged to make a choice betwixt these extremes, I would range myself on the side of the partisans of indulgence in regard to political rights ; for, if there be reason to fear the deficiency of intelligence, the conceding of political rights not only excites the desire to acquire it, but moreover nourishes patriotism ; too often, on the contrary, the refusal of these rights breeds jealousy and hatred, always fatal to the tranquillity of a state.

It will be perceived that, in insisting on the necessity of attaching to different political rights conditions corresponding to the importance of each of these rights, I have avoided laying down any rule relative to eligibility itself, because I did not see the necessity of this. If the source is pure, let things take their course ; and never will enlightened men make choice of an unworthy mandatory. Besides, what reason is there for fear ? Is the inexperience of youth, or the deficiency of fortune, to be dreaded ?—but is it not known that years and opulence always exercise a great

influence over men, and that talent itself, if deprived of these recommendations, will with difficulty obtain their suffrages? Why, therefore, restrict in this respect a liberty which the electors will certainly not abuse? By doing so, we should only estrange from the legislative arena men capable of making a figure in it, and weaken, in the eyes of the greater number, the power of the motives which lead them to study public questions, and to qualify themselves for taking a part in their discussion.

I have thus traced the basis of a system the most proper to call forth from the bosom of society the force and the conservative spirit with which it is endowed, in order to employ them, in just proportions, in the maintenance of peace and the common liberties. This system is not a new Utopia. Several writers have already spoken of it; and the ingenious author of the "Letters from St. James'" has, amongst others, described it, under the title of *The System of Gradations*, as the only one which, in the present state of civilization, is suited to the societies of modern Europe.

What, in fact, is necessary for constituting a good social system? What forms of elements are sufficiently strong to restrain the offensive tendencies, so that the powers that be may neither encroach on public rights, nor deviate from the track prescribed by the interests of the people? The system of gradations perfectly fulfils this end. As to the forces necessary for restraining the offensive tendencies, what can offer more of them than natural superiorities, whose roots, struck in the heart of society, bind up all interests together, and hinder their slightest oscillations? With regard to the proper employment of these forces, men,

whose fortune has every thing to fear from public agitations, will assuredly be the zealous supporters of all authority necessary for the security of persons and property. But it is more especially in so far as it offers a means of assuring the identity of the interests of power with those of the community, that this mode of organization surpasses all the other forms suggested up to our time.

In this system, it is to men imbued with the same spirit, that a society of which they are the most vigorous offshoots has delegated the care of watching over its happiness and maintaining its rights. Each interest has for its organ men subjected to its own peculiar influence; and as all these interests have their just portion of influence, it is almost impossible for the government to disregard their counsels, and to give way to selfish or ambitious views. Thus, strength, the conservative spirit, interests in unison with those of society, form the elements that compose the government; and it certainly would be very extraordinary if they did not give it a direction as beneficial as the uncertainty of human affairs will permit.

If men shall allege against such an organization the dangers of innovation, and the want of the guarantee of experience, I ask, Upon what institutions or laws may not similar reproaches be thrown? In societies everything changes, modifies, and developes itself; and new facts incessantly require forms suited to their exigencies. What then is to be done? To substitute for institutions in opposition to circumstances, others which, without having their vices, preserve their advantages;—and such is precisely the object which the system of gradations accomplishes.

What eulogies have we seen lavished on the Aristocracy ! It has been said, that, incapable of defending alone its prerogatives exposed to public dislike, it was interested in supporting the throne, which guaranteed to it such rights ; and that defensive forces, concentrated in a small number of hands, act with more energy. One might call in question the existence of such advantages ; but even supposing them to exist, it is easy to prove that the system of gradations offers them free of all the inconveniences objected against privilege. Let us not be led away by the idle accusations of a tendency to republicanism preferred against every people of Europe. If this spirit showed itself in Europe, if it produced in France the most violent crisis that a nation ever experienced, it was not the hatred of kings, it was that of a nobility whose cause they seemed to defend, that provoked the catastrophe. What stronger proof can there be of the real requirements of modern civilization, than the facility with which Napoleon, acting over again the part of Cromwell, suddenly restored a throne which was believed to have been for ever thrown down ? Do you think that this lesson is forgotten, especially at the present day, when the progress of knowledge, and the omnipotent voice of interest, have caused us to throw aside the blind admiration which the men of the last century professed for the institutions of Rome and Athens ? We at length know what liberty is ;—we know that, consisting in the peaceable enjoyment of the rights and faculties inherent in human dignity, not only may it be met with under different forms of organization, but that, of these forms, every age of civilization desires some that are peculiar to it. Thus, enlightened

men, the only ones whom we would entrust with legislative functions, will always recognise the monarchical authority as an invincible necessity of the social state. Far from looking upon it with dread, they will only see in it what it truly offers,—the limit of private ambition, and the bond and safeguard of the numerous and various interests of the community—in a word, the only institution which, in the extensive, populous, and rich states of old Europe, can rally and direct to a common object the scattered forces of society. Without doubt, they will take care to confine it within proper bounds ; but there is no reason to fear that they will rebel against prerogatives, which are as essential for the preservation of individual liberties as for the maintenance of union and public tranquillity.

With regard to the forces of which the Aristocracy disposes in favour of the throne, if an *esprit de corps* assures the harmony of them, let us consult history, and we shall see how very feeble and insufficient these forces have been. During the last two or three centuries, have not kings, in place of receiving from them a tutelary protection, been obliged to defend privileged bodies against the attacks of a democracy, thirsting for independence and equality ? To the aggressive propensities of the suffering classes were united the wishes of the classes on whom industry had conferred wealth ; and states, constantly menaced, have marched with difficulty in the midst of innumerable dangers. Under our new regime, with privilege would disappear the popular irritation which it keeps alive ; inconsiderable in numbers, and less indigent, the operative class would cease to present any subject of uneasiness ; and at the same time, for the protection of the govern-

ment against hostile attacks, there would be united together all that is strongest and most distinguished in society. Here would be realised the finest results of a political system; and if we set ourselves to consider what obstacles hinder governments, subject to the influence of interests, founded on justice and reason, from deviating from the courses which these same interests prescribe, how can we fail to admire a social form which, without destroying any of the advantages ascribed to privileged hierarchies, would leave to nations all the elasticity and vitality which impart prosperity to democracies?

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE EFFECTS RESULTING FROM THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE ARISTOCRACY IN ENGLAND.

ENGLAND, at the present day, holds the place in political controversies which the Greeks and Romans formerly occupied. The splendour of her arts and of her industry, the extent of her colonial possessions and of her commerce, the opulence which she has attained to, still more the imposing structure of her government—all point her out to the attention of publicists; the more so that the monarchical, popular, and aristocratical elements blended in her system, present facts on which the most opposite theories may be reared.

The examination of this subject, which to some writers might be a purely optional matter, becomes in the present work one of absolute necessity. England is

obviously at the highest point of European civilization, and she has reached it under the sway of a territorial aristocracy. Such a phenomenon, which seems so formal a refutation of the doctrines evolved in the preceding chapters of this work, requires to be elucidated; and I shall therefore proceed to lay bare its causes, trace its progress, and, above all, carefully weigh the consequences of the influence which the domination of the aristocracy exercises over the destinies of so prosperous a country.

And here I beg to be permitted to make a few preliminary remarks. The fact of a nation outstripping its rivals in the career of civilization, although it proves the superiority of its organization, is far from attesting the excellence of it. What is prosperity? A condition of which we can only judge by comparison; and who can say what a height the most flourishing nation might not have reached, if its institutions had been free of the defects which, without putting a stop to its progress, imparted to it a tortuous and vicious direction? Rome had conquered the ancient world; and the vanquished nations no more doubted of the superiority of her laws and manners, than of the ascendancy of her arms. Yet, how many imperfections disfigured her social condition! The consequences of these ripened with time,—which had its course,—and Rome, torn by civil wars, beheld her glory expire under the withering despotism of her Tiberiuses and Neros.

I will further remark, that the present time is ill chosen for speaking of England. Seven or eight years ago, when the misery of the lower orders was at its height,—when riotous meetings seemed the preludes

of a revolutionary crisis,—when on all sides arose against the injustice of her institutions an outcry justified by public suffering—how easy would it have been to establish the defects in her social condition ! But now, when order is restored, and a skilful minister, turning to account the narrow policy which false and restrictive maxims have imposed on the other cabinets of Europe, has thrown open to the trade of Britain the treasures of the American continent, and has supplied its industry with immense means of activity, how shall we dare to draw aside the gorgeous veil that covers her rankling sores ? I shall nevertheless do so. The life of nations embraces a long space of time ; and, however prosperous they may be at present, it is only in the whole assemblage of facts, and studying their development, that we are able to make a just appreciation of the futurity that awaits them. In the brilliant years of Louis XIV., who did not believe in the eternal duration of the French Monarchy ? yet even then did the germs which precipitated its downfall begin to appear. Venice closed her golden book amidst the applause of the statesmen of Italy : she was extolled for having eschewed with so much address the dissensions kindled in all the neighbouring republics by the struggle between the patricians and the people. But what was the final issue of a policy so wise in appearance ? The corruption of the ruling caste, the oppression of the subject classes, the progressive ruin of the national strength, and a downfall, tardy indeed, but not less humiliating because its progress was silent and unnoticed.

There is yet another point to which I have to solicit the attention of my readers. It is usual to praise the

English aristocracy for having taken under their protection the rights and liberties of the people ; but although such be the fact, it has neither the continuity nor the extensiveness which have been attributed to it. The result of social circumstances, it followed their course, and changed with them. Thus, under the successors of William the Conqueror, if the great vassals united themselves to the people, it was because, ill confirmed in their recently conceded domains, they could neither defend themselves against the encroachments of the Crown in their own names, nor prescribe to the latter the limits of its authority. Constrained to interest the inferior orders in their cause, they could only do so by communicating to them a share of the rights demanded ; and it was accordingly seen that the greater number of the charters extorted from the monarchs extended their benefits to necessary allies. This proceeding was so entirely the result of position, that at a later period we behold the aristocracy adopt the haughty usages of the same class on the continent. Thus, respectable writers, such as Paley, have regarded the hatred inspired by the galling yoke of the nobility as the principal cause of the enslavement of the Parliaments under the Tudors. And nothing is more probable than that—but for the violence of the religious factions which sprung out of the Reformation, the arrogant pretensions of the weak and capricious successor of Elizabeth, the diversified errors of Charles the First and his sons—the English aristocracy, like that of the rest of Europe, would have bartered the national liberties for the advantages attached to the exclusive possession of office, and the favour of a despot.

However all this may be, the point is of small

importance to our inquiries. England, such as she is at present, dates no further back than the accession of the House of Hanover to the Crown ; and it is sufficient for our purpose to consider what was then the organization of the powers to which was confided the maintenance of the public welfare. At that period the basis of the present order of things was established. The monarch, invested with the prerogatives necessary to the dignity of the throne, shared the right of legislation with the two houses of Parliament. In that of the Peers sat, by hereditary right, the chiefs of the higher nobility ; in that of the Commons, deputies freely chosen by the nation, and whose suffrages had the more weight because at that time the preponderance of wealth was on the side of the people. "What is the wealth of the Lords compared to that of the Commons ?" exclaimed the illustrious Chatham about the middle of the eighteenth century ; "A drop of water in the ocean." This circumstance requires to be kept in view, because it served to mitigate the evils arising from the inequality of rights.

Although derived from the feudal order of things, the civil laws of England were greatly preferable to those of the continental monarchies. They recognised, it is true, the right of primogeniture, but without admitting entails in perpetuity ; and if they favoured the concentration of wealth, they at least did not present insurmountable obstacles to the circulation of property. Another of their advantages lay in the impartiality of their provisions ; they favoured no one, so that every lord had to dread the effects of prodigality or misconduct as much as the meanest proprietor ; and from the equal nature of the chances of fortune, arose

the maintenance of the relations between the different orders of the community. Thus, in regard to property, England was more equally parcelled out than the great continental states ; but it was in her political condition that she infinitely surpassed them.

In fact, whilst in France and Spain the corrupt arts by which the favour of the prince was secured were for the great the principal means of fortune, the peers of England, invested with a dignity independent of the monarch, and called on to regulate the interests of their country, had before them a wider field of honour and reputation ; and in which, if birth opened to them the barriers, they could only distinguish themselves by surpassing their rivals in the knowledge of public business. To superior talents belonged by right high offices, lucrative situations, and even popularity itself. The love of esteem, interest, ambition, all urged them to cultivate their minds ; and, in point of fact, the higher aristocracy joined to their lofty character, the appendage of their independence, the liberal sentiments which education inspires. From the condition of the other classes emanated a spirit not less beneficial to the nation. Without immunities, exemptions from taxes, or privileges unfavourable to equality, the members of the lower aristocracy were strangers to the pitiable prejudices which in every other country doomed the privileged orders to vegetate in a destructive sloth ; they cultivated their estates, entered into trade, and, notwithstanding the titles with which they were adorned, they composed in the aggregate an opulent and powerful democracy, displaying, under the influence of indulgent laws, all the strength of the industrial character.

To the advantages before noticed, add those accruing from the representative system,—trial by jury, good municipal institutions, and, above all, the freedom of the press, which, pouring in a flood of light upon the acts of the government, prevented it from deviating from the line traced by public opinion,—and it will easily be perceived with what activity the causes operated, which, in imparting a salutary energy to the mental and physical powers of man, developed and multiplied the national resources. In other respects, England was favoured by circumstances. The expulsion of the Stuarts had not put an end to the hatred which divided great families. The suspicion of a secret attachment to the cause of the Pretender kept the Tories from power; and the Whigs, not being able to cast aside the principles professed by the reigning family of Hanover, became the protectors of public liberty. Thus were weakened the tendencies natural to the aristocracy, and the nation profited by its intelligence without being exposed to its encroachments. Under circumstances so propitious as these, how, it may be asked, did not England arrive at a still higher pitch of glory and opulence? In her wars with the most powerful monarchies of Europe, the excellent direction given to her forces made up for their numerical inferiority; the fleets of France were beaten on every sea; India became one of her dependencies; she possessed herself of our finest colonies, laid waste those of Spain; and the peace of 1763 left in her hands the sceptre of trade and of the ocean. Within the country everything advanced with the same rapidity. In the space of a few years manufacturing towns doubled their size. Liverpool and Manchester

saw their inhabitants increase tenfold ; and in the reign of George II., villages such as Birmingham contained 30,000 souls ! But what was of still greater importance, the spirit of trade and industry had taken deep root ; and the nation formed to itself ideas and manners, which enabled it to bear up against the effects of the abuses inherent in its constitution.

These abuses showed themselves in the end. In every country an inequality of rights produces its fruits, and England could not escape from the consequences of a factitious aristocracy. In vain did industry multiply riches, and commerce and the arts offer to the active classes the widest fields of wealth ; it was in conformity even with the basis of the existing order of society that the national resources were developed, and the legislative ascendancy caused the balance of wealth and power to incline in favour of the minority. A deplorable change took place in the relations formerly existing betwixt the classes ; and such was the rapidity of it, that, in 1815, property which forty years before had pertained to 250,000 families was concentrated in the hands of 32,000 proprietors ; and even in the latter must be computed the lands of 6,000 corporations, and as many belonging to the Church.

So sudden an overturn of the former order of things was no trifling event, and the effects of it, with which England is now menaced, are of a nature to excite the most serious attention. Not only has the concentration of wealth changed the relative strength of the different elements of power, but, by aggravating the evils of the aristocratic regime, it has left the masses without

any other defence than the enlightenment and spirit emanating from constitutional liberty.

I am aware that many statesmen have sought, in the obstinate wars which for thirty years threw upon a single generation the losses and calamities usually spread over several, the causes of the changes introduced into the structure of the social body in England ; and, in point of fact, there can be no doubt that such violent shocks hastened the work of time, and ripened the evils whose baneful germs were nursed in the institutions. At the same time, these wars had a bright side also : they fostered a great mental energy ; they led the rulers to spare the rights of a population compelled to immense sacrifices ; and, if they contributed to vitiate the natural order of things, they at least conducted to preserve in the moral order a salutary vigour. Let us give a glance at the English Constitution, and we shall perceive how difficult it was to obviate the evils attendant on the accumulation of landed property. The aristocracy had the preponderance :—all-powerful in the Upper House, the electoral system gave it a real ascendancy in that of the Commons ; and in the midst of the struggles excited by the ambition of parties, there remained questions as to which their views and opinions harmonized. Whigs and Tories, peers and representatives, in their capacity of great proprietors, had tendencies in common — tendencies which actually swayed the legislation, and imparted to it a noxious and partial direction.

Heaven forbid that I should accuse the English aristocracy of wilful injustice or hypocrisy ! I know that no aristocracy ever displayed more intelligence or patriotism ; but it is not given to men to discern the

defects of the laws which benefit them ; and in this respect the Whigs were not more clearsighted or disinterested than the Tories. Ever ready to declaim against the abuses of the royal prerogative, the Whigs saw with an indifferent eye the increase of the landed influence. A number of bills prejudicial to the interests of the inferior classes received their support ; parliamentary reform itself was never the object of their sincere efforts ; and it was to the lessening of the feeble influence of the Crown in elections, that the so much boasted measures of the Rockingham ministry were confined.

However, it is by facts that the assertions before advanced must be supported ; and the very abundance of these makes a selection from them embarrassing. We shall begin with those that relate to taxation :—

“ At the Restoration, the landed property,” says Hume, “ belonged to the gentry and small proprietors ; and during the protectorate of Cromwell they furnished nearly the sum total of the public expenditure.” Suppressed under Charles II., the land-tax was reimposed by the Parliaments of William at the rate of two-pence a pound ; but, in proportion as the landed interest became strong, the Parliament sought its abolition : at first reduced to three half-pence, it was soon brought down to a penny a pound ; and such was the onward march of things, that at the present day, when peace has put an end to the property tax, land does not contribute more than a thirtieth part towards the expenses of the State. The result of such measures is palpable : in untaxing the land, its value was increased in a ratio

equal to the capital of the taxes taken off, and the rentals of the proprietors were increased at the expense of the rest of the community. On the other hand, in supplying the place of the land-tax by other taxes laid exclusively on articles of the first necessity, the latter fell with all their weight on the poor ; whilst, on their part, the rich were favoured in the consumption of those articles of luxury which their ample means enabled them to procure. Thus did the undue increase of taxation impose a burden on the lower orders, which ought, in point of equity, to have been shared by the opulent classes. Still, I do not mean to assert that this result was intentionally in the view of the legislature—publicity always prevents the commission of glaring acts of injustice ; but, at the same time, who does not know with what dexterity, amidst the vacillating lights of public discussion, the seductive suggestions of private interest cause the balance to incline to one side ? However this may be, other measures were tainted with the same partiality. Thus, under the pretext of securing the nation against the evils of scarcity, premiums, sometimes equal to an eighth part of the price, were granted on the exportation of corn. And what followed ? A rise in the price of the article, an increase in rents, and a consequent augmentation of the incomes of proprietors. It would be useless to specify in detail all the advantages which accrued to these proprietors ; and I shall only instance a single fact as illustrative of the system followed by the legislature. In 1792, it was resolved to effect the division of common lands ; an object laudable in itself, but what did it produce ? A bill which in every

parish bestowed them on the richest landlords,—seeing, as it was said, that such persons could with the greatest facility bring them into cultivation !

It was the same in regard to the laws intended to regulate the connexion between manufacturers and their workmen. As early as 1350, a statute of Edward III. had fixed the rate of wages ; several subsequent acts modified its unjust provisions ; but it was only under the reign of George III. that the interests of the working classes were openly sacrificed by laws which prohibited them from combining together, whether with the view of obtaining an increase of wages, or a diminution of their hours of labour. Heavy penalties, extending to three months' imprisonment, were decreed against those who might violate the laws ; and, as if in order to make their injustice more apparent, a fine of 20*l.* only was imposed on masters who might coalesce for effecting a reduction of wages.

Such were the fruits of the aristocratic regime in England. The laws constantly tended to favour the great at the expense of the people ; and, by little and little, riches and power came to be exclusively shared by the minority.

Another cause accelerated the progress of the inequality of fortunes. In England, where large property exercises so much influence in elections, every opulent person naturally becomes the object of ministerial solicitude. Does he control the votes of a borough or a county ? he is by that means owner of a seat in the House of Commons—let him ask, and nothing will be refused him ; church livings, court favours, sinecures, appointments in India, in the Colonies, all are at his disposal. Thus, if wealth

confers power, the latter in its turn conducing to the increase of wealth, all the advantages of the social condition become more and more concentrated in the persons of a favoured few.

By this time my readers will have understood to what cause is to be traced the economical change, which, in dispossessing the inferior classes, has delivered over the government to some hundred families, whose names figure in the *Court Guide*, under the title of families who have, or pass for having, influence in elections. Whilst everything tends to aggrandize the great proprietors, the masses, victims of the partiality of the laws, are unable to bear up against the operation of the causes which tend to impoverish them; and the ancient equilibrium of power and wealth has been entirely destroyed.

It was during the ministry of Pitt that this revolution was accomplished. The son of the great Lord Chatham, it was under the auspices of the Whigs that Pitt began his political career. At the outset he advocated Parliamentary reform, and urged the necessity of it, up to the period when, better informed of the state of matters, he discovered the impossibility of making head against the high aristocracy. He then abjured his doctrines; and it was by enlisting himself in the service of the dominant party, and rallying under it by patronage men already united by common interests, that he formed the powerful coalition which maintained him at the helm of affairs during nearly his whole life. It is, besides, sufficiently probable that, endowed with a genius more fitted for speculating upon the play of material interests than for appreciating the action of moral impulses, Pitt seconded, in a spirit of

honesty, the ascendant march of aristocratical interests. At least he assigned, as one of the most decisive arguments in favour of the bill for the redemption of the land-tax, the advantage which England would derive from the investment of the value of small properties in the public funds; and it is certain that towards this object the greater part of his financial schemes were directed. Unfortunately, circumstances but too well favoured his design. Crushed under the weight of taxation, the small proprietors desired their former easy condition; and whilst the hope of regaining it by becoming fundholders was sufficient to decide them to dispose of their lands, a tempting price was offered for them by the rich, who well knew how and where to find a compensation. In Rome, men contracted debts in order to pay for the suffrages which disposed of high situations. In England, analogous circumstances existed; and in the space of thirty years the number of proprietors was reduced by nine-tenths.

If to put down all resistance—if to extract from a nation immense means of action abroad—if to induce it to lavish with a blind prodigality its blood and its treasure, constituted political skill—Pitt is the first of English statesmen; but if such a talent be only secondary, and if it is by the selection of a policy promotive of the general welfare, by the use of means calculated, amidst temporary difficulties, to ensure a durable prosperity, that we must judge him—Pitt can no longer be regarded as a great man: for it is evident that, by pursuing too exclusive a system, he threw his country out of the most favourable track for confirming its prosperity. The aristocracy degenerated into an oligarchy, and Pitt, instead of checking so pernicious

a proclivity, threw down the obstacles in its way. The fundamental error of his mercantile policy had long been loudly denounced ; for it was upon the slippery ground of commercial monopoly that he sought to base the futurity of the English people. The debt crushed industry ; and Pitt, in the hope that the ruin of rival nations would fill up the gulf, did not hesitate to increase it. " Have patience," was it said, in these days of delusion, to the labouring class who demanded work and bread, " have patience ; the trade of the world will soon be your exclusive patrimony—soon will it bring to your doors the wealth now scattered among all the nations of the earth—soon, the bread which you are now in want of, will you eat in abundance and joy—soon will you bless the privations, at the price of which you will have purchased an eternal peace and an unassailable felicity." Peace came ; but only to prove that the monopoly of the world—that fifty millions of colonial subjects, and the most admirable industry—but feebly counterbalanced the evils which the accumulation of riches had inflicted on the masses.

To what a singular state is not Great Britain now arrived ! In no country is the soil better cultivated, are the arts of peace more advanced, or manufactures more abundant—nowhere is a more noble use made of the powers of man—nowhere, in fine, are found so much wealth, and even luxury—and yet, no sooner is trade slightly deranged, than the cry of suffering is heard. It is because, although a nation may be industrious and rich, the means of well-being must be equitably distributed, and all must participate in the advantages that result from the progress of civilization.

Woe to those nations where the magnificence of the few displays itself at the expense of the greater number !

It is only a few years since Lord Castlereagh, in the House of Commons, jested upon a reply made by a farmer, who, reckoning among the necessaries of life, soap, tea, sugar, and candle, complained of the hardness of the times. What an ignorance of human nature ! How did he fail to discover that, as regards comforts, opinion being merely the result of acquired habits, the regrets of a people over the privations which they feel are always legitimate and well founded ? Besides, is it believed that a social instinct does not teach them, that an increasing, at least a uniform prosperity being the price of their obedience to the laws, they have a right to blame the government as often as these blessings are withdrawn from them ?

We cannot attribute to the enormity of the taxes which weigh on the English nation, the retrograde condition of the lower orders. Far from me be the design of disputing either the evils of a debt of eight hundred millions, or those still graver evils arising from an unequal distribution of the taxes ; but it is easy to show, that it is much less in the existence of the debt, than in the influence arising from the accumulation of fortunes, that are to be found the causes of those evils which afflict the body of the people.

What are the effects of a public debt ? One of them, without doubt, is the enhancement of the price of provisions and of the rate of wages ; another lies in withdrawing from the people the funds of which the reproductive use would have improved their condition and developed their industry ; but if a public debt must always be regarded as a galling burden, it is

only fair that all should equally support the weight of it, and that the gradual rise of wages should compensate to the poor the increased price of necessaries. Obligated to spend considerable sums in keeping up its embankments, Holland, during the eighteenth century, had to make good the interest of a debt not less heavy, relatively to the difference of population, than that of England; but did we see a sixth of the inhabitants living at the cost of the proprietors? On the contrary, in no country is labour better remunerated, and comfort more general.

Further, the increased price of the public funds, the moderate rate of interest, the gradual extension of mercantile enterprises, the abundance of capital—all go to show, that it is not in any decline in the national resources that we must seek the causes of the numerical increase of the unpropertied class.

In 1816, nearly four millions of persons required relief from the parishes, and sought in vain for work and bread. On this subject it has been said, that there were six hundred thousand workmen too many, because the industry that fed them was extinct. But why was it extinct? It will be replied, Because of the transition from a state of war to that of peace;—and this reason is plausible. Still it must be remarked, that other nations disarmed at the same time as England, and none of them felt so cruelly the effects of the change that took place in the modes of employment and means of industry. England herself had, in 1780 and in 1763, to undergo the inconveniences of a similar situation: there was then a slight degree of suffering, but no distress sufficiently deep to disturb the public peace, and give rise to sanguinary riots. It was because the

destruction of small properties had not then reduced seven-eighths of the community to the state of day-labourers, and perverted to the prejudice of the masses the relation in point of numbers existing betwixt the employers and their workmen. At these periods, the masses still found in their capitals a certain resource against their temporary embarrassments ; then, the evils which in the years that followed the last pacification afflicted the multitude, only reached a small number of individuals. In 1815, on the contrary, the increasing inequality of fortunes had long acted upon the internal consumption ; and England, undergoing the consequences of that law laid down by one of her most celebrated writers, Malthus—namely, “ that the excessive wealth of a small number is not so valuable, in respect of real demand, as is the more moderate wealth of the greater number ”—saw its working population more numerous and less independent of events—a prey to sufferings the more irremediable as being the result of a combination of causes. Unfortunately, these causes, whose operation had been silent, and which had lain hid in the depths of society, escaped attention ; and so it fell out, that, amidst the explanations to which recourse was had, no attention was paid to the influence of the change effected in the distribution of wealth. A single prominent fact ought nevertheless to have sufficed to enlighten economists. It was not that riches were wanting in England ; the ten or twelve millions which the opulent classes were forced to sacrifice to the poor were paid without much difficulty ;—an incontestable proof, as it seems to me, that the whole mischief proceeded from the inequality of the means of well-being, and that, too, in a country where the manufacturing

arts had made the most extraordinary advances, where commerce had poured in immense wealth, where shipping and colonies employed so many hands, and opened so many outlets to the labouring classes.

There exists between England and other countries where wealth is unequally diffused, a difference which it is important to point out. In the latter, if the people suffer without complaint, it is because, developed strictly in the circle of those resources which legislation traces to them, and having only the ideas and habits natural to their condition, they do not feel the evils of retrogression, and even enjoy the advantages resulting from the gradual improvement of the processes of industry. In England, on the contrary, the people have declined from the operation of laws too favourable to the great proprietary; and from thence have arisen a spirit of discontent, and a hatred of the existing order of society, to the outbreak of which it would be dangerous to afford an occasion.

A writer of great sagacity, the author of "*The Letters from St. James*," has calculated the extent of the chances of peril that so sinister a state of things presents. In his opinion, a ninth part of the population in possession of the lands, capital, factories, productive funds, intelligence, and political power—and disposing besides of another ninth under the head of place-holders, soldiers, salaried retainers, and servants—will easily hold in check the other seven ninths, that circumstances have reduced to the state of mere labourers. Hitherto, facts have justified this assertion; but will they always remain the same? The causes which have altered the anterior relations, will they always cease to operate? This is what is doubtful. From the pre-

dominance of the aristocratic element, and partial laws which have insensibly robbed the masses to the advantage of the few, does the evil proceed; and to redress that evil, laws dictated in an entirely opposite spirit, and producing contrary results, are imperatively called for. But is it likely that such laws will be passed? I do not believe it; and yet, so long as the system exists, property will follow the direction traced by it, and the number of the unpropertied class will go on increasing.

But where will England find fresh means of supporting herself against the consequences of the concentration of wealth? She possesses already all those which the state of the civilized world can offer. To the benefits of her former trade she has lately added those of an intercourse with the republics escaped from the yoke of Spain. But if so many advantages could palliate the defects in her organization, and raise the working classes from a condition so perilous as their present, let it always be borne in mind that nothing is less certain and stable than such advantages. What, in fact, are those colonies, those commercial outlets, that maritime supremacy, and all those resources which British industry with so much skill and activity turns to account? Benefits which an insurrection abroad, an unfortunate war, unexpected reverses, might annihilate in a day. In Great Britain, more than in any other country, the evils have a positive and fixed character, while the means of resisting them are perishable and precarious.

Such are the economical results of institutions which have committed the destinies of England to a territorial aristocracy. A small number of families excessively rich,

and a multitude of mere labourers, have displaced in her bosom the classes whose gradual prosperity formerly kept up harmony betwixt the several parts of the social body; and the disparities of power and wealth make their evils felt. No doubt, without the load of public taxes, the evil would not have been so extensive; still, without the continued action of an exclusive and interested system of legislation, the debt would not have weighed so heavily—and who knows even if it would have existed? for, out of political elements differently combined would have arisen other doctrines, and another use would consequently have been made of the national resources. Aristocratical institutions, in these alone do we behold the causes of the sores with which England is tormented; it is to these that the knife of the operator must be boldly applied. The abolition of the law of primogeniture—the passing of laws more favourable to the equalization of wealth—a reform in parliament which shall elevate the democracy—these are the sole and only means of ensuring to that country a prosperity at once durable and worthy of the enlightenment of its people. To all the palliative measures hitherto imagined may be aptly applied the words of Luther, “They cure the warts, and leave untouched the ulcers, or even envenom them still more.”

There was a time when the passions, kindled by the rivalry betwixt the two nations, gave a tone to all the works published in France on England. Writers among us then boldly prophesied her downfall, marked the period of it; but England, still erect, marched from victory to victory. So many predictions, belied by events, have turned men’s heads. Is that country

mentioned now ?—it is to present it to us a finished model of social perfection ; and, as usually happens, it is to the abuses, always most distinct and salient, rather than to what is good in its system, that British prosperity is ascribed. Deplorable effect of the weakness of the human mind ! To noble and liberal institutions England joins others that are iniquitous, and the latter even are made the subjects of eulogy. Men there are amongst us, who still doubt the value of the liberty of the press, of trial by jury, and the advantages of municipal independence. They withhold these blessings from the people ; and aristocratic institutions, — institutions which, silently corroding the bonds of society, have already divided the nation into two hostile classes, — institutions whose flagrant injustice ranges impartial men on the side of the adversaries of order, — these are what they extol, and invite us to accept ! Ah ! may France, casting far from her this fatal gift, never exchange her civil equality for the laws to which England owes the perils which menace at once her liberties and her happiness !

It is now time to consider the change introduced into the composition of the social body in England in its consequences on the spirit and nature of the government. This is the important point ; for if the aristocracy were as corrupt as it is powerful, it would be impossible to remedy the evils whose progress is so alarming.

We have seen to what causes ought to be ascribed the good direction for a long time impressed by the debates in parliament on the march of affairs in Great Britain. The disunion of the members of the aristocracy redressed and corrected its natural tendencies,

and made of the democracy, supported by a section of the great families, a salutary counterpoise. That combination is destroyed ; the development of interests emanating from the great proprietors has falsified the spirit of the legislation ; with the pre-existing relations have changed the proportions of strength betwixt the powers ; to the hereditary attachment to doctrines have succeeded maxims more suited to present conditions ; and, what is strange, it is to the profit of an indolent, do-nothing aristocracy, that the accumulation of the wealth created by the industrious activity of the people has accrued.

Towards the close of the American war it was easy to see, from the instability of the views of men in power, the fluctuations of party-men, and the violence of the struggles betwixt aspirants to the ministry, that a great change was in operation in the bosom of society: it was the aristocracy in labour ;—but old traditions and ancient prejudices fascinated the eyes of men ; and far from crying out against the concentration of wealth, even the sincere friends of constitutional liberty accused the Crown of all the evils which they witnessed ;—much more, they applauded the circumstances by means of which were formed, in the privileged chamber, colossal fortunes. Thus, William Pitt, in citing, as an argument against parliamentary reform, the wealth of the House of Commons, said on the 7th of May, 1780 :—“ The Lower House is sufficient for maintaining public liberty. What is the cause that has so much increased its preponderance ? The change that has taken place in wealth, the amount of which becoming every day more considerable in that House, renders it able to oppose successfully the increasing

influence of the Crown. For a long time past the House of Lords cannot be considered as a counterpoise, and the peers are become too weak to serve as a rampart against the encroachments of royalty." Alas! a few years have sufficed to make apparent the dangers which this change in the distribution of wealth has brought along with it!

Up to that time, the desire of arriving at the distinctions of the peerage had left some causes of division betwixt that body and the members of the Commons; but, according as the credit belonging to wealth created in the Lower House a great number of hereditary seats, a community of interests and political power attached the possessors of them to the high aristocracy; and all that dominated by the ascendancy of wealth became gradually bound up together. Perhaps events accelerated this fusion of interests and parties, but its main cause was a dread of the demands of the people.

The doctrine of parliamentary reform had been thrown forward, and the people eagerly seized on it. From the time of the ministry of Lord North, societies were formed in order to petition for modifications in the representative system; and the great mob of London, in revealing a hidden danger, had made the aristocracy draw closer its ranks. Then came the French Revolution, which completely banded together men who had to dread every change that might precipitate them from the top of the social scale. At the report of the sanguinary victories of Jacobinism, all parties were thrown into consternation; and the violence of the threats then directed against authority was such, that all the reminiscences, attachments, and hatreds, which had previously divided the higher

classes, were hushed. In the House of Peers, the majority of the great families, the Portlands, Fitzwilliams, Spencers, and Loughboroughs, deserted the cause of the people. In the House of Commons, Wyndham, Burke, Anstruther, Gilbert Elliot, and a number of other eminent persons, left the benches of the opposition. In vain did their old friends pursue them with sarcasms, and apply to them the most cutting and contemptuous epithets ; the blow was struck, the Whig party was rent asunder, and if it did not lose all influence in public affairs, it was indebted for this to the splendour of the talents of Fox, and the prudent sagacity of Lord Lansdowne.

Thus disappeared in England the parties whose counterpoise had raised the nation to the height of glory and opulence. At the present day, the names remain, but the doctrines are extinct; and we no longer find either Whigs, Tories, or Independence ; the nation being divided into two great factions—the friends and the enemies of reform. The one, that of the people, but without union in its views, leaders to guide it, or other bond than a common suffering, and the aversion cherished towards the existing order of things ; the other made up of men whom a happy existence inspires with a conservative feeling and a dislike to political changes. Calm in the days of prosperity, and prone to assail each other in those of calamity, the rulers and the ruled have been driven by the course of events into opposite roads, and everything announces a dangerous collision. No doubt the means of preventing such a crisis exist, and the high aristocracy disposes of them : but will it make use of them? Will it reform the abuses of the hierarchy of wealth? Will it seek to re-attach the

people to the commonwealth by the only ties which can be efficacious and lasting—those of property? This is the question. Far from me be the design to prophesy; there are in the life of nations circumstances which escape the calculations of human foresight; but whatever may be the influence of these, we may, without incurring the charge of temerity, draw from certain well-established premises probable conclusions.

That no reform can take place unless through a revolution, or by consent of the dominant class, is a truth that clearly appears from an examination of the elements of which the government is composed. Supreme in the House of Peers, the aristocracy sways the deliberations in that of the Commons. [Here the author gives the statistics of the old House of Commons.] Such is the state of the respective forces which are in presence of each other. The House of Commons is no longer anything but a branch of the House of Peers; and the Aristocracy, invested with all the active power of the government, arranges at its will the laws and destinies of the nation. What can the royal authority do to oppose it? The ministers are only the mandatories of the aristocracy, and fall as soon as they attempt to resist it. Although there be in it prizes to be contended for, party quarrels and differences that divide it, these petty causes only make the helm of the State pass from hand to hand; but the oligarchic current is formed, bears along the vessel of the State, and woe to the pilot who tries to sail against it!"

Such are the facts that we must take into account in judging of the futurity of England. Armed with a parliamentary omnipotence, the aristocracy can do all. Without any other check than its own prudence, to it

belongs the task of dissipating the dangers inherent in the progressive inequality of social conditions. From it alone, in fine, must proceed the sacrifice of those vicious institutions to which it owes so exclusive a supremacy. But is it in the nature of things to expect from it such a sacrifice? If we consult the lessons of history, the answer will be in the negative.

Still it is proper to bear in mind, that we cannot exactly predicate from facts occurring in days of ignorance, the tendencies of modern societies. Civilization has now become an active principle; it strengthens the morality of intellect; it purifies the voice of conscience; and the lights which it strikes out, combating the empire of interests, may, in a certain degree, make up for the want of equity in the laws. England, besides, is indebted for other advantages to her representative system. If more than a day was required for transforming an enslaved into a free people, a longer time is necessary for effacing the traditions, manners, and spirit, which liberty begets; and, amid the ruins of the old relations of society, it is certain that moral corruption has not made the strides which the progress of the inequality of wealth tended to induce; neither the maxims of justice, nor the liberal ideas emanating from a better order of things, have disappeared; in the hearts of the rich still exist the generous sentiments which tempered the aristocratic dominion. In no country does the influence of knowledge react more powerfully on the vices of its institutions; in none is authority more enlightened or better administered; and, in fine, everything attests in the rulers a desire to bestow upon the people, in lieu of the rights withheld from them, all the blessings of civilization.

Thus have we lately seen effected in different branches of the administration, a number of beneficial changes. The collection of the taxes—the scale of public expenses—the organization of the law courts—the commercial system—mercantile policy—all have been reformed—everything has taken a turn satisfactory to the lovers of knowledge and of humanity. All this is no doubt much ; but let it not be forgotten that these reforms, the work of a minister skilful in managing parties, do not go to the bottom of the evil ; they leave intact the elements of the oligarchical omnipotence ; and the fate of the bill* relative to the rights of the Irish Catholics sufficiently proves the aversion with which the oligarchy looks upon every change, whose consequences might in the least degree clash with its interests. Still, without radical changes, it is impossible to heal the sores which grow deeper with time ; to cicatrize them, we must lay a hand upon the holy ark, upon the organic laws ; a new direction must be given to measures, and juster relations be established between the classes and power ; for, destitute of this support, doctrines pass away, knowledge is perverted, and the checks existing in the intellectual and moral ideas of the governed are thrust aside and disregarded.

This is because fixity is not an essence in governing powers, any more than in society itself. Aristocracy, democracy, all political forms, have their active principle, which too great a latitude perverts and changes. Organize a governing democracy, and as in the bosom of the multitude there ferments a secret spite against all above the common level, democracy will tend to

* The Catholic Emancipation Bill did not pass till some time after this work appeared.

level superiorities. Give over the state to an aristocracy, and an aristocracy, jealous of its power and prerogatives, will set no bounds to its encroachments. Not only does the hereditary nature of its privileges, by inculcating the idea of a natural superiority, necessarily weaken in its members the instinctive notions of justice and equality, but the aspect of the forces of the majority always infuses a degree of dread into the enjoyment of the sweets of power, and begets the desire of crushing down the subject masses with a yoke which never seems sufficiently heavy and oppressive.

The present intelligence of the English aristocracy offers no sufficient guarantee against the further development of such tendencies. If the present generation is still wise, enlightened, and well disposed, it would require nothing short of a miracle worked by Providence to keep up a similar spirit in future generations. Berne offered for a long time the spectacle of an oligarchy exercising with mildness an absolute and unjust authority; but at Berne, where the laws provided for an equalization of fortunes, the rulers were not richer than the subject-people; and the moral condition as well as the easy circumstances of the latter, imposed on the aristocracy that moderation which, in the opinion of Montesquieu, is so essential to its durability.

In England, the progress of things is quite the reverse. It is to patricians, exposed from their earliest years to the impressions of luxury and pride, that are confided the destinies of a population whose physical leads to their moral decline. Thus, whilst on the one side the hearts of the rulers will become more and more accessible to corrupting influences, on the other will

disappear the checks existing in the manners and present respectability of the inferior classes. Here lies the principal danger. Woe to a people among whom secret or open causes drag the labouring class towards a state of hopeless poverty, of which vice and immorality are the ordinary accompaniments. Slavery awaits them. What can the cold lessons of theory avail, against the sentiments which the ever present view of popular debasement and degradation inspire? What interest can be felt in the maintenance of rights, which only seem calculated to furnish arms for turbulence and sedition?

Such are the considerations which ought to fix the attention of enlightened men in England. Let them profit by the present tranquillity and prosperity of the country to extirpate the pernicious abuses of inequality; else the tree will bear its fruit, and from year to year will be accumulated the obstacles to a peaceable and judicious reform. What might be done to-day, will be impossible to-morrow; for, if some unexpected event should happen to kindle anew the hostile dispositions of which the people have so often manifested the symptoms, all will be lost: it is not in presence of the enemy that we lay down our arms.

And if it be objected to me, that the attempts at rebellion in 1819 were easily repressed, I reply, that we must consider the troubles at Manchester, and the preparations for insurrection made in the counties of York, Stafford, Warwick, Nottingham, Chester, and Leicester, much less as the measure of the aggressive strength of the multitude, than as proofs of the progress of the spirit of subversion which the march of facts unfortunately tends to spread and fortify. Let us

observe the peculiar character of each of the risings which, since the American war, have troubled the public peace ; and we shall see what alterations the popular feeling has undergone. In the great mob of London, it was in the name of the interests of the English Church that the multitude rose; and however deplorable may have been the excesses which they committed, there was at least in their motives a certain degree of attachment to established order. Fourteen years later, in 1796, the people agitated solely with a view to a reform in the representation;—in 1819, they had for exciting causes only misery and radicalism.

Besides, this change in the dispositions of the inferior classes has produced its natural effect on the higher. To the benevolent and conciliatory expressions made use of by the Chathams and Legges, has succeeded harsh and contemptuous language. Parliament heard, without surprise, a minister, in arguing against the rights of the people, tax with an ignorant impatience those just complaints which intolerable suffering had wrung from them. The acts were suited to the speeches, and several bills suspended the constitutional liberties ; the people were deprived of the right of holding meetings to petition the government for a redress of their grievances ; they were forbidden to have military drills unless under the inspection of officers of the army; finally, a power was given to search for arms in houses suspected or pointed out. Perhaps an inhabitant of the continent would be only surprised at the extent of the rights which the people enjoyed ; but that is not the question. Whatever these rights may be, it must be observed that, up to that time, the inconveniences of them had not been

felt; and that to abrogate them was to acknowledge how grievously the sentiments had degenerated, which for so long a time had rendered them innocuous.

If, as has been shown, the spirit of the people has taken a direction dangerous to the repose and tranquillity of the state, there are symptoms which equally attest the strengthening of aristocratic prejudices. Never did a passion for the worn-out frivolities of feudalism exhibit itself so strongly—never did the vanity of the pre-eminence assigned to rank, escutcheons, and titular honours, shew itself in a more puerile light, than at the coronation of George IV. With what astonishment did we not behold the *élite* of a grave and thinking people attach so much importance to the minutest observances of a Gothic ceremonial, and dispute with each other the functions whose inanity gave rise to no feelings but those of ridicule! Will it be replied that all this was merely the homage paid to formalities closely associated with all that is venerable in the constitution? But when the same tastes and tendencies colour the acts of private life, when to these is added the attachment to abuses which flatter family pride, and when it is said that to lop away some of the exuberant branches of the constitutional tree is to hasten its fall, we may be permitted to judge such doings with greater severity.

After all, what remains clear is, that up to the present time, the action of material causes has tended to separate more and more the views and the interests of the governed from those of their rulers; and has excited in the people the desire of innovation, as well as rendered the aristocracy more tenacious of those maxims by which all change is resisted. What will be the

issue of the struggle between tendencies so opposed to each other? This I know not; but what I know is, that a state of things which separates and disunites the classes of which the community is composed, furnishes arms for all sorts of innovators and demagogues, as well as for a monarch, endowed with sufficient courage, to offer to the people, in exchange for public liberties, the spoils of that caste whose greatness oppresses them.

I have thus passed in review the various facts which most clearly explain the situation of Great Britain, and the singular contrasts which it presents. If extensive liberties, rousing and fructifying the efforts of industry, have produced the shining results of which the nation is proud, the aristocratic preponderance, secretly poisoning the sources of its prosperity, has engendered evils whose increasing pressure becomes a just subject of alarm. Certainly no people have a higher claim on the gratitude of humanity than the English—none have rendered greater services to the cause of civilization—none have adorned their annals with a greater number of glorious deeds—none, in fine, have risen higher in the arts, sciences, and commerce; and still there are none who have reason to throw upon the future a more anxious and disturbed glance. Ah! may England strengthen herself by a complete change in her proprietary law, and avoid falling from the high position which she deserves to occupy! May her aristocracy, instead of confining legislative reforms to secondary changes of an administrative order, generously offer upon the altar of its country the noxious privileges which it enjoys! But I fear that so noble a sacrifice is above the force of humanity: the promptings of private interests conceal

its utility. Never yet did ruling castes discover the injustice of which they reaped the fruits; and when we have seen them come to admit the existence of some of the evils, it has been only to try to show how well they were corrected by the liberal sentiments and the wise intentions of those who profited by them.*

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE EFFECTS OF AN EQUALITY OF RIGHTS IN FRANCE.

AFTER having considered the effects of the predominance of the least exclusive aristocracy in Europe, in a country where extensive liberties have attracted to it all the benefits of civilization, let us now see what is the situation of society in another, where an equality of rights has prevailed. It will be at once perceived that I allude to France. For more than thirty years, the abolition of the privileges of property has left to wealth in that country no other regulator than the diversity of talents, and the accidents of fortune;

* At the time this Chapter was written, trade in England had revived, and the people, again in full employment, seemed likely for a long time to remain quiet and orderly. More recently however, and while the work is going through the press, causes easy to explain have produced another commercial crisis, and we have seen the most alarming symptoms manifested in the manufacturing districts. Already have bands of operatives again betaken themselves to the breaking of machinery, and coercing their employers;—large masses of people have resisted the armed force, and committed numerous excesses. Without doubt, these disorders will soon cease, but, in any event, I beg the reader to take the facts before stated into consideration, as going fully to justify and bear out my observations on the causes which gave birth to them.

landed successions have devolved on children of the same marriage in equal portions ; a new generation has grown up under the influence of laws founded on equity : these laws have borne their fruits ; and it is by the latter that the question must be judged.

If France has retrograded, — if its population, become less dense, is poorer, and less moral ; if mendicity has become the condition of a great number of individuals ; if the laws are less respected, and if the axe of the executioner is oftener in activity, — then there can be no doubt of the new laws being vicious. But if, on the contrary, France has advanced with giant strides in the career of the arts and in civilization ; if its population, wealth, manners, industry — in a word, all that constitutes the splendour and the felicity of a people, have been augmented, distributed, and improved in its bosom, we can only render homage to institutions which have produced such noble and beneficial results.

Let us, therefore, examine the present state of France, and see the nature of the modifications introduced into it since 1789. Let us then try to appreciate what it has lost or gained by a change of system.

Before the Revolution, France, reduced to a state of bankruptcy, was only able to furnish six hundred millions of francs, required annually for the state expenses : a milliard is easily obtained from her present resources. Before the Revolution, France had only twenty-five millions of inhabitants : she now reckons more than thirty. Before the Revolution, misery reigned in the rural districts, and all the great towns swarmed with a populace as indolent as it was rude and dissolute. This state of things no longer exists. Such has been, in the course of thirty years, the increasing progress of

labour and wealth over that of population, that ease and comfort have penetrated into every rank ; the day labourer has seen his share of well-being augmented ; and, better fed, clothed, and lodged, he is, finally, more largely provided with the sweets of life than at any former period. An industry more active and better regulated, cultivation extended over several millions of hectares of land formerly in a state of nature, the produce of the rents of land doubled, manufactures established on different parts of the territory, a population more laborious and more intelligent extracting from the same productive funds the vastest means of well-being and prosperity,—such are the fruits of the equality of rights ; such are the facts which this equality opposes to the interested and mendacious assertions of its detractors.

Will it be objected, that in all this is only seen the simple effect of the ordinary development of an industry improvable in its nature ; and that without modifications in the social organization, time alone would have produced the same results ? But how comes it, that in past centuries the lapse of time never gave a similar impulse to the productive powers of the nation ? Let our objectors explain to us how it happens, that not one of the other states of Europe has shown a similar advancement. And how much more truly admirable still does this regeneration appear, when we consider under the dominion of what circumstances it was accomplished ! It was a prey to the ravages of foreign and civil wars, during which so many provinces were laid waste, so many towns burnt or destroyed ; it was after having lost her colonies, fleets, and commerce, after having experienced the disastrous effects of her

assignats, of a *maximum* of wages, and the capitulation of her debt; it was after having undergone the triple scourge of anarchy, despotism, and administrative centralization, that France shewed herself radiant with wealth and prosperity. Under Louis XIV., under that reign which has been painted to us as the golden age of the monarchy, some years of an unfortunate war sufficed to make all the provinces a theatre of misery and desolation; and yet see how struggles more sanguinary, calamities more prolonged, trials more severe, did not even arrest the car of Fortune, so much energy was there in the springs which bore it onward.

But if it be impossible for the blindest partisans of privilege to deny the reality of the benefits which France enjoys, there is a field in which facts of a more vague and less tangible kind furnish greater room for dispute; and it is accordingly the morality of the people they accuse of having degenerated. In their opinion, the abolition of the old regime has dried up the source of the noble and chivalrous sentiments on which the old society justly prided itself. At present, say they, there is no more urbanity, dignity, or elegance in the manners, no more disinterestedness in men's hearts; honour even has lost that flower of delicacy, which was the soul of the monarchy, the infallible rule of private duties, and the faithful auxiliary of the laws and morality; in a word, to a nation essentially polite, religious, and devoted, has succeeded one abandoned to the suggestions of the most vulgar interests. What can be replied to such interested declamations? Must we be compelled, in order to whitewash the modern generation, to exhume the so much vaunted reminiscences of the old French aristocracy? must we,

recall the Jacqueries, the massacres of the Armagnacs and the Bourguignons, St. Barthelemy, the frenzy of the League, the madness of the Fronde, the mistresses and the bastards of the Great King, the unbridled corruption of the rakes of the regency, the shameful weaknesses of Louis XV. and the debaucheries of his court? Perhaps it will be said, that if such were the manners of the higher classes, they at least did not extend to the masses kept at a distance by privilege. Let us then seek for a greater assemblage of facts; and, in order to judge of the progress of public morality, let us examine the conduct which the nation displayed in circumstances in which the prostration of all the powers that watched over public order, left it without any other check than the voice of opinion, and the impulses of the social conscience.

Two periods may furnish us with information on this head: the one embraces the first years of the Revolution; the other, that which followed the fall of the imperial throne.

It is known to what deplorable excesses the French Revolution gave rise. Europe lays the blame of these on the principles in the name of which the reformers acted;—as if, from the date of the publication of the new doctrines, a day had been sufficient for changing the spirit and temper of a nation,—as if it were not always of the past that we must ask an account of the ideas, sentiments, and passions which bring about political subversions! Such, nevertheless, is the truth: those classes, whose struggles and contentions engendered so much violence and crime; that nobility, which ran off to enrol itself under the standards of the enemies of its country; that people, whom it unpiteously

proscribed; those factions, that by turns butchered each other with the sword of the law; those men, who figured in the reign of terror: all these were the nation of the old regime. The vicious elements whose fermentation produced so many calamities,—it was in those regretted times, in which the clergy were rich and numerous, the nobility exclusive and privileged, the monarch invested with a power without bounds, that they were collected in the social body. It was because habits of luxury and domination had enervated or corrupted it, that the nobility neither knew how to resign itself to the sacrifice of its unjust prerogatives, nor to combat honourably in its own defence; it was because they were debased, degraded, and oppressed by the nobility, that the people rushed into the arena panting for vengeance and disorder.

Subsequently, the nation underwent new trials:—Twenty-five years later, the French territory was invaded: twice in less than eighteen months, hostile armies ravaged its provinces: twice the destruction of the government unloosed the bonds of authority from a multitude, a prey to all the humiliations of defeat, and the sufferings of a frightful scarcity. What was the conduct then of a nation that is said to have been demoralized by the Revolution, and in the bosom of which twenty years of war, and twelve of a despotism whose glory did not lessen its deteriorating influence, ought to have sown fresh seeds of depravity? We saw it contribute with all its power to the maintenance of public tranquillity, repair with alacrity the disasters of the invasion, resist the instigations of factions bent on troubles and disorder; finally, display, in the midst of the most difficult conjunctures, a wis-

dom and a prudence that confounded the hopes of its enemies. Much more ; at the most critical moment, when famine, the outrages of a foreign soldiery, political hatreds and dissensions, seemed to combine to provoke a catastrophe, the army was disbanded, and a multitude of men destitute of resources, and familiarized with all sorts of dangers, were thrown back upon a sullen, disunited, and suffering population. Well, an event which in another age would have inundated the country with malefactors and robbers, was consummated without the slightest disorder ; soldiers who had grown grey in camps seized the spade or the shuttle, and drawing from their labour an honourable means of existence, made themselves a place in society.

Here was certainly exhibited a very striking contrast betwixt the French of 1815 and the French of 1789 ; and to what cause must we attribute it ? To a single one,—to the difference in the legislation as to private rights. To the exclusive, partial, and degrading laws of the old regime, had succeeded others entirely conformable to equity ; with individual conditions the moral habits of the people had changed ; and if a thirst for revenge still misled a small number, three millions of families, raised to the sweets of property, and imbued with that conservative spirit which comfort gives birth to, carefully watched over the maintenance of public order, of which they knew the value. In 1815 in France the strength had passed to the side of the friends of public peace, and thence came the calm and resigned attitude of a nation exposed to countless sufferings.

Do we desire still stronger proofs of the reality of

the blessings attached to the equality of rights? Let any one compare the respective situations of France and England in the years that followed the general pacification. On both sides there was disarmament; there were to be undergone both the inconveniences of a change which accrued to the employment of labour and capital, and those of a transition from a state of war to that of peace; but how unequal was the shock in each country! Whilst England, victorious, and dictating to her rival a treaty, all the advantages of which were reserved to her, only restored a few colonies to their ancient mother-countries, and re-opened the free passage of the ocean to nations who were not prepared to dispute with her the advantages of it,—France, conquered, was violently thrown back within her ancient limits: she abandoned vast conquests, and lost the markets for her industry of twenty millions of subjects—Belgians, Germans, or Italians; to the expenses incidental to a change of government, she had to join both the burdensome support of foreign armies in the midst of provinces ruined by the war, and the payment of the contributions imposed by the allies; and still she stood her ground. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, industry, all followed their course; capital was not wanting for speculations; rents of land and houses were supported; the people found labour and bread; the taxes were paid; the public roads were safe for travellers; and in two years the nation had triumphed over the united scourges of invasion, military contributions, and political disorganization. In vain, on the contrary, had the British minister, strong in the fortunate issue of the war, time to provide for a foreseen transition. Neither the

reduction of the budget, the flourishing state of the manufacturing arts, colonial riches, the resources of the most extensive trade, nor the advantages of victory, could preserve the nation from the disastrous consequences of an event which forced it to displace a small portion of its immense capital : a great number of factories were shut up ; and from eight to nine hundred thousand operatives wandered over the counties, asking that relief which the workhouses were already affording to three millions of persons. A distress so deep had the ordinary results ; despair fomented rebellion,—conspiracies were organized,—plans of insurrection were combined ; four years after the peace, blood flowed ; the constitution was suspended ; and little was wanting to prevent a state that had so lately disposed of the destinies of the world, from falling to pieces under the assaults of a justly incensed populace.

There is an important lesson to be learnt from these facts. Of the two nations, it is the richest and most industrious, the one that reaped the fruits of victory, that suffers the longest and most cruelly from a shock, of which every thing tended to soften the violence. In England, where the supremacy of the aristocracy has reduced the labouring classes to an unpropertied state, some families excessively rich consume in luxury and idleness the fruits of the labours of an immense multitude ; and however advanced it may be, the home trade taking from that cause a direction too exclusive and concentrated, on the least change in the state of the foreign market, the masses, without other means of existence than the wages that depend on it, remain exposed to the most irremediable misery. In France,

on the contrary, the incomes formerly absorbed by the luxury of the privileged orders, have passed into the hands of the productive classes ; industry has followed the direction indicated by the displacement of wealth, and multiplied the means of general well-being ; turned chiefly to the production of articles necessary to and within the reach of the greater number, nothing puts a stop to it, or, if such a misfortune occurs, the people find in their small capitals resources against such accidents. Thus, in England, in that country so proud of its laws and institutions, there are on an average twice as many criminal convictions as in France, where the population is greater by one half. There were in France, in 1813, 4,210 criminal convictions ; in 1814, 1,723 ; in 1815, 3,362. In England, there were in 1813, 7,164 ; in 1814, 6,390 ; in 1815, 7,813 ; and subsequently the disproportion has become more considerable, always keeping in view the difference of population. It is computed that of late years there are in England ten capital convictions for one in France.

Such are the disparities which the two nations present. The peace of 1815, in particular, rendered the effects of them apparent. Never was the difference more evident of the strength and vitality which nations derive from laws more or less partial, more or less equitable and agreeable to the general interest ; never was more clearly seen what miseries are inseparable from the concentration of power and property in the hands of an aristocracy.

It may, moreover, be remarked, that France is not the only country which can be adduced as an example of the advantages which accrue from a free circulation

of property. Although none of the other great states of Europe have completely adopted the principle of an equality of rights with regard to successions in heritage, there are still found in their history circumstances which may be appealed to in favour of that principle. As often, then, as some modifications in their laws allowed the productive classes to participate in the species of wealth consecrated to the support of the splendour of the nobility and the luxury of the clergy, the industry and opulence of the people suddenly took an extraordinary expansion. England herself can furnish a proof of this. After stating that Henry VIII. carried out, without perhaps being aware of all its consequences, the design of humbling the nobility, which his politic father Henry VII had begun, the judicious Robertson adds : " By the alienation or sale of the Church lands, which were dissipated with a profusion not inferior to the rapaciousness with which they had been seized, as well as by the privileges granted to the ancient landholders of selling their estates or disposing of them by will, an immense mass of property formerly locked up was brought into circulation. This put the spirit of industry and commerce in motion, and gave it some considerable degree of vigour. The road to power and opulence became open to persons of every condition." And from the cause here stated, resulted the high state of prosperity which the nation enjoyed under the following reigns. The same thing took place in Holland, and in the Protestant States of Germany, by the secularization of the property of the Church ; and to this cause must in a great measure be ascribed their industrial superiority over the Catholic States. In Denmark, the emancipation of the serfs, and the

letting out on long leases the lands of the Crown, gave such an impulse to population and wealth, that the national resources were found not to be diminished by the cession made to Sweden of the provinces of Halland, Scania, and Bleckingen. In Prussia, the exertions made by Frederick II. to call to the soil the productive class,—in Austria, the reforms that Joseph II. introduced for the same purpose,—were of the greatest service to agriculture, and rapidly augmented the wealth of these countries. Every where, in short, have we seen the prosperity of nations constantly dependent on the extent of the rights and means of development enjoyed by the active and industrious classes.

In France, some writers have taken it upon them to exclaim against the pretended dangers of the subdivision of landed estates ; but see what, after having dwelt on the multiform evils of entails, was said on this subject about a dozen years ago, by the celebrated Henry Storch, in a “ Course of Political Economy,” composed for the instruction of the Grand Dukes of Russia, Nicholas, (now emperor,) and Michel. “The Revolution put an end to this obstacle in France, (the privileges of property), where the number of small proprietors is at present more considerable than in any other country in Europe. However slender this advantage may appear when we regard it in the light of a compensation for the evils of that terrible catastrophe, looked at in the abstract it is one of the greatest that it is possible to conceive ; and if we do not as yet perceive all its salutary influence in the prosperity of that kingdom, it will not be long in becoming apparent when its government, adopting the

maxims of moderation and wisdom, and renouncing its projects of conquest and ambition, shall confine itself to the cultivation of the arts of peace, industry, and commerce."

Ah! then may France preserve, in all their integrity, the advantages so dearly purchased by her Revolution! Justice infused into the laws, a host of antisocial prejudices uprooted or weakened, property set free from its shackles, the hope of arriving at it held out to the artisan, funds devoted to luxury and dissipation transformed into means of useful employment, the road to fortune and distinction opened to all; these are the blessings for which she is indebted to the triumph of equal rights; it is these that have developed the intelligence and stimulated the energy of the more numerous classes; these are the causes that have fertilized our fields, increased our intelligence, perfected our arts, and carried well-being and the love of order into the humblest cottages of the poor. Woe be to him who would seek to deprive us of such invaluable acquisitions!

CONCLUSION.

MY task is finished; and it is with the conviction that in respect to laws and institutions nothing partial, artificial, or coercive, is agreeable to the designs of Providence, or the real interests of humanity, that I bring it to a close.

I have rendered justice to the aristocracy:—if I have declared its existence incompatible with the re-

quirements of an advanced state of civilization, I have not hesitated to acknowledge that there are times when its domination may, on the whole, be productive of more good than evil.

In the social system, power is the natural attribute of wealth and intelligence:—the more rare as society is more rude, these blessings are for a long time the portion of only a small number; and the latter, taking advantage of the ignorance of the masses, have no difficulty in transforming into an exclusive and hereditary privilege a superiority arising out of the force of circumstances. Thus were formed those bodies of nobles and dominating castes that held in dependence the rest of the population. This order of things, as long as an incipient and imperfect industry created little that was superfluous, seems the most natural of any; if all prerogatives lead to abuses, classes whose members were unable to take much extension did not feel the pressure of them; and the advantages which the aristocracy drew from them were in some measure the wages of the services which it rendered to the community.

It is no longer the same when the progress of arts and civilization enriches, enlightens, and fortifies the popular classes. In their ranks is formed by degrees a number of men capable of exercising all public functions, and worthy of participating in all the distinctions reserved for the aristocracy; and privilege branded with inutility appearing from that time a sacrifice without any compensatory advantage, society, whose interests it neglects, or whose activity it restrains, is not long in calling for its suppression.

Such is the march of the facts which, after having given birth to an aristocracy, most commonly provoke

its declension and fall. Even if privilege did not injure the interests of the majority, still it would be found impossible to withhold from them the rights of which they know the value, and for the proper exercise of which their intelligence affords a guarantee. In all times an unfounded exclusion offends them, and they can only be appeased by putting an end to it.

Let us nevertheless not accuse them either of pride or ambition :—the past amply exculpates them from such a reproach. What people have ever refused to submit themselves to the yoke of powers whose utility was obvious to them ? Is not the long and peaceable reign of an aristocracy the most convincing proof of it ? If, in our day, everything tends to make this same aristocracy enter under the common law, it is because, with the times when there existed no other industry than agriculture, no other source of opulence or consideration than landed property, have vanished all the titles to a superiority the evils of which alone remain.

And what arguments can be set up in favour of noble castes ? They no longer possess more than a small portion of the elements of social grandeur. To the active classes belongs the superiority of wealth ; and it is to the influence of unjust and restrictive laws that the nobility are indebted for that distinction which yet marks some of the families that compose their order. It is the same with intelligence. Education has become the portion of the people ; and from the fact of the great number of distinguished men whom the French Revolution caused to emerge from the lowest ranks, it is easy to perceive that, long before, there was no necessity to depress the social body, in order to

rear up and produce the talents which the service of the state required.

Thus forced to abandon this line of argument, the partisans of the aristocratic regime have fallen back on other considerations. They boast, and with a greater show of reason, the love of country which local attachments give birth to. Without doubt, that noble sentiment exists; and whoever after a long absence has revisited his native soil, knows the force of it. But the delightful emotions excited by places and objects that recall to our remembrance parents, friends, and all the beings whose affections embellished and gladdened our early days, are they the peculiar privilege of large possessions? And does the heart of the soldier, as he again enters under the thatch of the paternal cottage, beat less joyously than that of the rich when the roof of the ancestral chateau reappears to his view?

Others have said, that, attached to the state by the fixity of its means and its interests, an aristocracy of the soil is endowed with a cautious, conservative spirit, which we shall search for in vain among the rest of the community. Here again they are wrong; for there are none who have more to dread from troubles and revolutions than the members of the industrial classes. Devoted to the pursuit of the most delicate and vulnerable interests, the least disorder deranges and injures their prosperity. Let a war break out, let the safety of the provinces be threatened, or the state be torn by civil dissensions, and long before landed proprietors are affected, trade is afflicted with stagnation. What is more—as every suffering population only restricts its consumption of alimentary substances after having given up the use of less essential articles, there

are no calamities, down to those arising from the inclemency of the seasons, which do not fall with full force on the classes engaged in the fabrication or sale of manufactures. Assuredly there is in this, something at times to make governments uneasy ; but is there not, on the other hand, some advantage in having in this sensitiveness of industrial interests a pulse, whose beatings indicate precisely the economical state of a people? Besides, if, in conformity to aristocratic maxims, we ought to measure by the number of their dependents and followers the extent of the rights and powers of the different members of a society, it is to the manufacturers, whose employment and capital support so many hundreds of families, that the greater share of these rights and powers ought to fall ;—and this specious doctrine has not, in fact, wanted supporters.

But such is not the design of civilization. An enemy to all arbitrary preferences and exclusive influences,—beholding in interests merely the effects of the same generating principle, only offshoots of the same stock, and modes of activity whose diversity results from the very diversity of the human species—finally acknowledging, that all contributing equally to the amelioration of the social destinies, civilization requires that all should be equally represented ; and only seeking in material distinctions a pledge for those that are moral and intellectual, it requires, that at the point where comfort gives reason to presume independence and information, all individuals invested with equal rights should be freely called to concur in the formation of the powers which compose the government.

It is quite in vain for short-sighted legislators to

endeavour to maintain an order of things less liberal, to try to retain modern societies under the trammels of political forms suited to poor and barbarous times ; it is no longer in their power to beat back the mounting wave of civilization. The chains which ignorance may have consented to wear in bygone ages, the distinctions which it may have rendered useful or necessary, no hand at the present day is sufficiently vigorous to bind on the enlightened populations of Europe ; and the efforts made for so iniquitous a purpose can only end in sanguinary and terrible catastrophes.

Ah ! why should rulers, ever prone to doubt the prudence of nations, have so much confidence in their own wisdom ? The secret of an order of things so perfect as to exclude all change, Heaven, alas ! has not divulged to kings any more than to the people. Desiring that, in social as in private life, human reason should preserve an influence of which it has to bear the responsibility, it has not permitted any institution to subserve for ever to societies essentially progressive ;—it has, on the contrary, ordained, that the changes which take place in their wants, interests, spirit, and component parts, should be followed by corresponding and analogous ones in the forms of their organization.

I grant, nevertheless, that the unreflecting enthusiasm, the rage for innovation, on the part of some friends of doctrines founded on social perfectibility, may injure its cause ; but does an error in drawing conclusions from it destroy the truth of a doctrine ? And what fact is more evident than the existence of this same perfectibility ? See what ameliorations have successively taken place in the destinies of mankind.

It is from the depths of deserts, where they vegetated a prey to countless miseries, that savage and cruel hordes have risen by degrees to the attainment of arts, knowledge, and all that dignifies civil life. Drawing from each of their conquests over the material world the means of making others still more important, they gradually emancipated themselves from the yoke of want: sounder opinions and purer moral habits have been the fruits of a reason directed to the appreciation of the consequences of actions; and the refinement of their ideas and sentiments, in opening up to them an unlimited field of intellectual reflection, makes them acquainted with the most delightful and noble enjoyments. To attain what is good,—such has been, and such ought to be, the fruit of all improvement of the human faculties. It is not only public wealth that increases in proportion to the development of the productive arts; but according as sounder and more enlarged ideas enlighten the instincts of conscience, justice strengthens its power over the human heart, and the maxims which it prescribes, after having regulated the private relations of life, extend their salutary influence to the governments.

We ought attentively to keep in view this result of the expansion of the natural tendencies. It is towards what is good and just that the progress of civilization conducts societies. Such is the fact, which prescribes to the laws their sphere and limits. It shows, that if they ought to punish and repress the outbreaks of the evil passions, they at least become dangerous as often as, going beyond their proper object, they aspire to prescribe to forms of government an arbitrary direction; for then, in place of the ends of Eternal Wisdom,

they tend necessarily to substitute the always hazardous conceptions of human wisdom.

But it will be asked, By what signs are we able to know whether or not institutions thwart the designs of Providence, and injure the real interests of mankind? By an infallible sign,—By their being at variance with the clear, positive, immutable principles of morality and equity. As soon as an institution impedes the exercise of the imperscriptible rights of the members of the community,—the free use of their property or their faculties, the employment of some of their means of well-being and elevation,—declare it boldly, That institution is vicious, and its fruits are bitter. Justice is not rendered to all,—favours, exclusively accorded to the minority, are not the price of useful services,—they present an obstacle to the remuneration of the masses,—all cannot rise in the degree of their talents,—all are unable to acquire the share that their efforts entitle them to of the advantages of the social state;—these are the signs of the imperfections of the laws, as certainly and incontestably as the imperfection of every scientific theory is proved by the facts that oppose and refute it.

For, I repeat, as there is no privilege or prerogative, no special law, no exclusive or partial institution, which does not conduce to despoil the multitude to the profit of the smaller number, or which, at least, is not prejudicial to the success of its attempts to arrive at opulence or felicity, there is none which is not at the same time contrary to the dictates of eternal justice, and which consequently does not end with being in opposition either to the material requirements of civilization, or to the opinions of right and duty which it breeds

and propagates. Privileges which a relative utility causes to be tolerated, incur the public hatred in losing that quality ; and the people then no longer look upon them unless in the light of an injury, of which their dignity demands the suppression. Such is the point at which the most flourishing nations of Europe are arrived. Sufficiently rich, enlightened, and intelligent to draw from their own bosom all the capacities necessary for the business of society, they have no longer occasion for the onerous services of a factitious aristocracy ; and it is with reason that they seek to emancipate themselves from the impediments which the distinctions of caste and the prerogatives of property oppose to the amelioration of their destinies. It is the part of governments to satisfy views and wishes whose justice is incontestable ; let them bear in mind that the energy of these feelings will necessary increase with civilization, and that the greater part of revolutions have had no other cause than the upholding of institutions in opposition to the manners, spirit, and tendencies of a people.

TRANSLATOR'S APPENDIX.



No. I.

FRENCH LAW OF SUCCESSION VINDICATED IN THE CHAMBER OF PEERS, APRIL, 1826.

THE DUKE DE BROGLIE (Prime Minister since 1830, late Ambassador in England, and an extensive landed proprietor,) opposed the law, which he viewed with alarm, and as an act of temerity bordering on madness :—

To make laws to keep the rich rich and the poor poor is but a work of supererogation, and is carrying aid to the quarter where it is least wanted; whereas, in my opinion, a legislator ought to do the very reverse. The Great Frederick used to say, "Take care of the small coins, and leave the louis-d'ors to take care of themselves;" a wise maxim, which may be turned to account in the present discussion. In spite of the proscriptions and the revolution, two-thirds of the land now belongs to the ancient nobility and the ancient middle class in the towns. The reporter of the law has said, that in giving little to the younger sons, and much to the eldest son of a family, the former will be rendered active, intelligent, and industrious. The celebrated Dr. Johnson once observed, "The law of primogeniture has this to be said in its favour, that it only makes one fool in a family." The only plausible argument in favour of the proposed law is derived from the breaking down of the soil into too minute portions. The Minister of Finance believes that this subdivision, after having operated beneficially, will become pernicious; and he added, that were he possessed of documents, showing the exact state of property in France at the present time, he would take care not to produce them, for the honour of his country, but would bury them in the bowels of the earth! It is possible that small farms may be less productive and profitable than great, because the one require more labour relative to their size than the other. But what connexion is there betwixt great farms and

great estates? The one are the result of the abundance of capital, the other of a material and unproductive concentration, frequently accompanied with sterility.

England and Ireland are two countries under the same government: the same civil laws have ruled both for several centuries: in both, entails and primogeniture have existed, and estates are as great in Ireland as in England. These facts are indisputable. Much has been said of the statute of the 2d of Queen Anne, which subjected the successions of the Catholics to the custom of gavelkind, or the rule of an equal division. But what did it produce? In force for two generations at the most, it has been repudiated by Catholic families, because it was looked upon as an instrument of persecution; and twenty cases in which it was applied are not to be found. If the Catholic population in Ireland is to the Protestant as six to one, property is to the Catholics as one to six. In England, the thriving condition of large farms is owing to the abundance of capital, and the goodness of the government. In Ireland, great estates are let for long definite periods; either for a fixed number of years, varying from twenty-one to ninety-nine; or, what is more common, on leases depending on one, two, or three lives. The latter species of lease is in law called Freehold, giving a right of absolute property, limited as to time. When the farmer dies before the expiration of the lease, without leaving a will, the farm devolves on his eldest son, to the exclusion of the rest of the family. You thus see that the law of primogeniture reaches far, since it affects not merely the owner of the land, but also its temporary occupant, the farmer. What does the latter do? As he has neither the intelligence nor the capital requisite for carrying on a large farm, he divides it into small lots, and sublets it to petty tenants, who, in their turn, often subdivide and sublet their possessions into still smaller portions, so that betwixt the landlord and the original tenant there are often found four or five grades of tenantry. The real occupant is the poor Irish peasant, who dwells in the same hut with his cow, feeds on potatoes and a little milk, and who works day and night with his own hands on his small patch of land.

The difference betwixt France and England lies in this, that in France the agricultural classes are proprietors; and, the principle of property acting as a stimulus, if they are, on the one hand, generally deficient in theoretic information, they are, on the other, exceedingly provident and inventive: if they are wanting in capital, they are extremely active, economical, and laborious; whilst in Ireland, on the contrary, where the same classes possess no capital but their hands, and hold their small lots of land at the discretion of a middle-man, interposed betwixt

them and the landlord, not only are they ill informed, but they are devoid of industry,—they are not only poor, but indolent and improvident.

Would the proposed law have the effect of creating capital to be applied to agriculture? No. I am not aware that such a virtue has been ascribed to it. Would it have the effect of extending and propagating the knowledge of improved modes of cultivation? It would as little do this; nor has it any such pretensions. If, therefore, it were to operate, (as God forbid that it should !) so as to create, *by force and artificially*, great properties, what would then happen? It would simply dispossess the present agricultural class. It would substitute for a great number of small proprietors, active, intelligent, and laborious, a small number of great ones, who would dissipate in Paris the rents of their large ill-cultivated estates, and a class of greedy farmers, who, destitute alike of information, and of that clear-sighted zeal inspired by property, would become indolent, rude, and miserable. By this law we should make France of the present day what it was formerly—we should not assimilate it to England, but to Ireland.

In regard to agriculture, as to a great many other things, we live in a period of transition.

Before the Revolution, France, generally speaking, was a country of great estates, very ill cultivated. The events of that memorable revolution—the sale of the church lands, of those of the emigrants, and the communes—have dispersed the soil among thousands, or, we may rather say, millions of persons: with property the desire of acquiring it is diffused amongst the lower orders, and has increased tenfold the natural power of those events, and of the laws of succession. At the present time every peasant aims at becoming an owner of land, and when he has purchased a portion of it he longs to increase his boundaries. Hitherto, this passion for property has worked admirably; still, the best things are capable of being abused; and at the present time I am inclined to think that this universal proprietary tendency is a sort of mania,—that the peasantry buy up at too dear rates the parcels of land that suit them, and that they might often make a more profitable use of their small capitals. It is this competition that causes estates to sell higher in lots than entire. But this evil is of such a kind that it will work its own cure. No system can be of long continuance after its vices have become apparent, and when it is found to act in a manner inverse of what was expected. A legislator, moreover, would have enough to do were he to interpose so as to prevent all bad bargains, and to redress the various evils resulting from the false calculations of individuals.

What have we to desire at present ?

That this movement towards division, which has hitherto operated so beneficially, should be arrested at the point where it becomes mischievous ; that the *action*, which always, more or less, goes beyond the mark, (owing to the infirmity of our nature,) should be succeeded by a *reaction* of a no less salutary kind ; that a change should be brought about *naturally and spontaneously* in the future ; that in places where the soil is favourable, great estates should be let out in large farms, in such circumstances as to prevent the latter from becoming evils.

But how can this new movement be generated and set in operation ? There are only three means of creating great properties, namely, conquest, confiscation, and the accumulation of capital. Lands can only be taken from their present owners by violence or voluntary purchase. Conquest, I hope, will never be dreamed of. Confiscations were abolished by the charter, and no one thinks of re-establishing them. There thus only remains the accumulation of capital.

But the accumulation of capital is the work of manufacturing industry and of commerce ; it is, therefore, towards these that our attention ought to be turned.

There is a natural tendency on the part of great fortunes realised in manufactures and trade to seek an investment in land : this tendency, I repeat, is natural, for land has social and political advantages attached to it which moveable wealth does not possess.

When a man, who has become rich by his talents or labour, becomes by choice a proprietor of land, he is naturally inclined, in the management of his newly-acquired estate, to adopt or create superior modes of cultivation. He is in a situation to do this, for, industrious and well-informed, he either knows the best modes of farming beforehand, or he soon acquires them, and puts them in practice. With an ample capital at his command, he is able to make the needful advances, and to wait for years until they yield the expected returns. A great property thus formed in a favourable district—large farms laid out with the view of promoting the best modes of culture—present chances of success which the accidents of succession can rarely accomplish.

The Minister of Finance, indeed, asserts that great estates can never be recomposed in this way ; that the idea is chimerical ; that it would be necessary to buy up acre after acre ; and that these purchases, in detail, could only be made at exorbitant prices. But, first of all, this view of the matter presupposes that cultivators will, in opposition to their own interest, persist in their competition for small lots of land ; and we have shown that this error can only have a temporary endurance. On the other

hand, if we desire to reason justly, we ought never to assume extreme cases. The rich capitalist, who seeks to become a landed proprietor, is not obliged to set himself down upon a single field, to buy up one perch on his right, another on his left, then a third, and so on. He begins by acquiring a property yielding fifteen or twenty thousand francs of rental, and of such there are always a great number in the market; this first purchase becomes the nucleus of a great estate made out of successive acquisitions.

It is this movement towards concentration that we have for some years seen in progress in the circle of twenty or thirty leagues around the large towns, the chief centres of industry and intelligence, and which, if it meet with no obstacle, if France continue to grow richer, will every year advance with accelerated speed.

If, therefore, we are sincerely desirous to see great estates again formed in France,—if we wish to see farming on a large scale, with all its advantages, introduced into our country,—in place of decaying manufactures and trade, let us hold them in respect, for it is they alone that can render us the good service we are in quest of. Instead of calling the persons engaged in them democrats and republicans, which, in the language of the day, means revolutionists and carbonari, let us protect them as they desire to be protected, and favour their enterprises by consideration, liberty, and security.

But I hear at this moment an objection raised on the Ministerial benches, to which I hasten to reply.

While we are waiting for this movement of concentration, property, under the operation of the law of an equal division, will go on subdividing itself *ad infinitum*; and although great estates were formed, this law would speedily dissolve and decompose them. But let us avoid forging phantoms and chimeras in order to have the satisfaction of combating and vanquishing them.

All the apprehensions which have been expressed of seeing the number of electors fall off, of beholding rich families sink into poverty, and land unduly divided, originate in one leading fact, which, had it been examined with the least attention, would have saved us a world of declamation. This fact is the rate of increase of the population. Let us see how it stands at present.

Since the Constituent Assembly introduced amongst us the law of an equal division, thirty-six years have run. Thirty-three years form the average of a generation, or, according to ordinary calculation, the space of time during which one generation replaces another. During this interval, to what extent has our population increased? At least a sixth.

Now tell me, if you believe that wealth has not increased in

France by more than a sixth since 1789? If you have any doubt on this head, only reflect for an instant. Observe, that France now sustains a weight of taxes three times heavier than what produced the revolution; that it supports at the present time an amount of taxation equal to what it bore with difficulty when the French empire stretched from Rome to Hamburg; remark how the amount of indirect taxes exceeds year after year the calculations of the minister; look around you on all sides, and see how new buildings arise, new industrial establishments of every kind increase, and how whole towns are called into existence, and seem to spring out of the earth at the call of industry.

Well, then, since it appears that in France wealth has increased during the last forty years much more rapidly than population, it cannot be true, as has been affirmed, that families have, on an average, become poorer; or that the division of landed property is the result and the evidence of the diminution of private fortunes: nor can it any more be true that this diminution is entirely the necessary, inevitable, and gradual work of the rule of legal equality, in place of being, in a great measure, the spontaneous and voluntary effect of purchases and sales, which have produced a new distribution of one kind of property, and nothing more.

Does then the subdivision of property threaten to continue for ever, and without limits, even in spite of the will of those interested in checking it? No; because the population only increases slowly, and the division of the land is a matter of choice and discretion. There is, therefore, no danger whatever in our present situation.

Here it is scarcely necessary to observe, that it is not my intention to contest the truth of the principle of population as laid down by Malthus. It is equally clear to me as to others who have followed the progress of the economical sciences, that the productive powers of the soil cannot be indefinitely increased, but have a certain fixed limit; whilst the increase of the population, if it be not restrained by human prudence, so as to bear a just proportion to wealth, would find a check only in a want of subsistence, and in the sufferings and mortality which are its results. But if the principles of political economy are truths susceptible of demonstration, they are nevertheless abstract ones, which are not rigorously applicable in all countries and at every time. All that I affirm is, that, in the present state of France, the progress of wealth is more rapid than that of population, and that in all human probability it will continue so for a long course of years. We have, therefore, in the present case, no occasion to discuss the validity of the general theory—which I admit. What we have to do is, to inquire what is that distribution of property

the best calculated to maintain, for the longest possible time, a just equilibrium between population and wealth; to find out what is the order of things which will most certainly develope in the nation intelligence, prudence, and morality, the only effectual barriers against an excessive increase of the population. The system which, in my opinion, will best ensure such a result, is that of an equal division in successions; and if I ever have occasion to treat the subject in a scientific form, I am prepared to maintain this opinion against that of the English economists. In support of the views which determine my conviction, it will be easy to produce more than one example in point. I could more especially cite different portions of Switzerland that have been subject for centuries to the law of an equal division, and in which the population has remained stationary for more than sixty years, whilst, during the same period, the agricultural wealth has been more than trebled.

I now come to Entails, which, in the course of the present debate, have been so much lauded by some speakers, and censured by others. For the present I shall pass over both the eulogy and the censure, and confine myself to the incontestable fact, that the object of entails is to withdraw property affected by them from circulation, and to render it unmarketable. From thence it follows that entails tend to perpetuate everything in the state in which it exists; so that if they are introduced into a country of great estates they will keep them great, and will prevent small ones from being created: if, on the contrary, that country be one of small properties, entails will keep them small, and prevent the formation of great ones. These consequences being clear, I ask you whether France be a country of large or small properties?

The present population of France, as already stated, increasing more slowly than its wealth, there is no chance of individual fortunes being diminished by the law of an equal division in successions. The natural tendency of wealth is to increase in the hands of its possessors, so that there is no danger of the lower classes mounting suddenly to the first rank, or of the higher descending to the level of the others. The subdivision of land has been mainly an affair of choice and calculation, not one of necessity, and it will therefore stop short at the point where private interest dictates that it should. In assuming the inverse of the reality,—in supposing that the population increases rapidly, and that the sources of public wealth are dried up,—the present law would not merely be powerless for correcting the evil, but would aggravate it. This law being only addressed to eighty thousand out of six millions of families, its operation would be confined to the hundredth part of the territory, and would carry

the remedy to the quarter where there is no evil to cure. In regard to those families, and that portion of the soil which would fall within its operation, it would accelerate the subdivision of estates and fortunes in a greater ratio than it would retard it. By separating in every succession the moveable capital from the land, it would encourage cultivation on a small scale, and render it the worst possible. By bringing entails into a country where property is much subdivided, that subdivision would be perpetuated, and an invincible obstacle be presented to that tendency towards concentration, which it is of so much importance to second and promote. So much for entails.

In recurring to the right of Primogeniture, I ask you to tell me in what it consists? We have seen its origin sought for under the tents of the Patriarchs, among the huts of the free Saliens, and in the strongholds of the feudal nobles; curious researches, certainly, but mere questions of erudition, which are here without the slightest weight or authority. To appreciate the right of primogeniture, understand its nature, and judge it by its effects, we have no occasion to mount so high nor travel so far. Go out of France, pass into Spain, Italy, Germany, and England itself, and then look around you.

The right of primogeniture is the foundation of the inequality of conditions; it is *privilege* pure and absolute, without disguise or compensation; it is a positive right resting upon no natural one, not even on that natural right which the Keeper of the Seals so learnedly defined, and which, on his showing, resolves itself into the law of the strongest; it is in certain favoured families a preference given to the eldest son, merely on account of the accident of birth, and for no other reason founded on the rank, fortune, or social position of the father; a preference which carries with it the exclusion of the younger brothers and sisters, who, put aside with provisions more or less inadequate, vegetate under the tutelage of their elder brother, and are either advanced by his influence, or sink into the crowd without a name. Such is the right of primogeniture in all countries.

And why, I ask, in our times, resuscitate this unseemly institution, the wreck of an order of things in France which has passed away, without leaving behind it, at least in the masses, so far as I know, either traces or regrets?

The Ministers do not dissemble the purpose in view. The new law has for its object to model the principal families of the kingdom after the image of royalty, and to erect each of them into a petty domestic sovereignty. The object in view is to concentrate and perpetuate, as far as possible, in such families the exercise of political rights; to fix and transmit, in a certain manner, from male to male, the rights of eligibility and election,

and to create a corporation of persons, who, relieved by this law from all care of their private affairs, would in their turn relieve the mass of the people from all care of public affairs, and leave the latter nothing else to do than assist at their debates, and see them dispute the government among themselves.

Nor is this all. Upon what species of wealth is it intended to found the preference assigned to the eldest? Upon landed property alone. And what is the reason of this selection? Because land is, in the eyes of those who now govern us, more noble and respectable—in a word, more monarchical, than moveable property.

I invent nothing, I merely repeat: if it were possible, I would make use of the very words of the defenders of the law; and, as it is, I will correctly repeat their opinions. According, then, to their own testimony and confession, the present discussion turns on a projected law for reviving amongst us the inequality of conditions for the mere sake of inequality, that is, legal inequality among the children of the same father—between different branches of the same family—between the different families of which the nation is composed—between different properties, some of them entailed electoral fiefs, others plebeian and saleable—between real and personal property; in short, inequality in everything and everywhere, not in the way of exception, but as the common law of society. All the glosses of language, and all the artifices of a specious and deceptive argumentation, are unable to conceal or evade the truth as I have now exhibited it. The facts speak for themselves.

For the last forty years such has been the order of things in existence amongst us, that all the blessings of society, the most worthy of our ambition,—consideration, power, and wealth, have been virtually the subjects of competition to all. He who possessed these advantages has been forced to make efforts to preserve them; and he who was without them has been compelled to use the means of acquiring them.

But it is this free competition which is odious and displeasing to our rulers, who now propose to subvert it as far as they are able. They seek to create an intermediate order of Aristocracy—a new nobility on a small scale—which shall occupy a middle place between the Chamber of Peers and the people; an order of gentlemen-proprietors, who shall acquire by right of birth, and peaceably enjoy, consideration independently of personal qualities, power irrespective of merit, and fortune without labour and economy!

I am well aware that the work on hand is as yet only sketched out; that it is still in an embryo state. The new Aristocracy, I foresee, would at first be very awkward and uneasy in its position; that, for a time, admission to it would be obtained on easy

terms, and that it would be difficult for these pseudo-patricians to escape from ridicule. But patience! everything ripens with time.

To reduce these eighty thousand families to seven or eight thousand, as will perhaps be proposed to you in the course of this debate; to eject from this restricted corporation all the families too poor to make a worthy figure in it; to detach the licence-tax from the franchise, as is now proposed in the case of physicians; to annex definitively the electoral right to entailed property; to finally close the golden book, as in Venice,—are attempts which present nothing more bold and difficult than those which you now hazard. I, therefore, do not go too far,—I do not make use of the language of exaggeration, when I assert, that what is now preparing is a social and political revolution—a revolution against that which was made in France forty years ago.

True it is, that the right of primogeniture exists in England a hundred times more stringent and unjust than it would be here under the proposed law. There the whole landed estate, without exception, goes to the eldest. The younger sons have no other resources than a church inordinately and scandalously rich, sinecures without number or measure, an army wherein commissions are bought and sold, lucrative places in the colonies, and in India, where, for a long period, fifty millions of men have been given over to the devouring rapacity of a swarm of exactors. Yes, I say, the distinction of ranks in England is preserved with a punctilious and pedantic severity. Its government has for several centuries belonged to a small number of great families, who, ranged under separate standards, contend for power, and transfer it from the one to the other, according as the wind of opinion directs. All the details of administration are devolved on a vast corporation of gentlemen, who, under the names of Justices of the Peace and Grand Juries, execute, decide, and dispose of everything—gratuitously, I grant, but at the same time free from control, and exempt from all real responsibility. And still I do not hesitate openly to declare, that whatever feeling of repugnance such an order of things may excite, the English Aristocracy is an honour to humanity, and stands forth as an imposing spectacle in the history of the world. Allied from the earliest times with the interests of the people, it has never ceased to vindicate the rights of the meanest citizen as strenuously as it has defended its own; it struck out the path in which the nation now advances; it has run the same risks, defended the same causes, and fought the same battles as the people. For a hundred and fifty years that the victory has been gained, it has neither swerved nor degenerated; it has received within its pale all the superior men who have risen up—a happy emulation, the worthy fruit of the free institutions which it has founded, has been

maintained in the higher ranks. The English Aristocracy, in short, is still the *Elite* of England—of that England which holds the first rank among the free nations of the earth.

But what conclusions ought we to draw from the state of things in England? Where is the man sufficiently presumptuous to dare to ascribe such striking results to the right of primogeniture? Who will take it upon him to say, how much is to be attributed to time, to events and circumstances, how much to the conquest of the eleventh century, how much to the Reformation of the sixteenth, and how much more to the Revolutions of 1640 and 1688?

And, although we were to ascribe to the right of primogeniture in England a thousand times more influence than is due to it, when did a lucky chance acquire the privilege of changing our notions of right and wrong, of good and evil, and of subverting the foundations of morality? Because the English Aristocracy is noble and generous, is that law less iniquitous which robs a whole family in order to create those colossal fortunes that exceed the revenues of several sovereign states of the continent? Is there more piety in that order of things, where Church dignities are awarded in the way of temporal indemnities? Is that state of things more wise where sinecures encumber all the branches of the administration, and oppose an insurmountable obstacle to the most salutary reforms? If, of late years, the government of India has become more pure and less oppressive, how many tears did not the administrations of Clive and Hastings cost humanity!

The Tree of Good and Evil does not always bear its real fruits here below. Sometimes events seem to mock our foresight, or rather to be so directed from on high, as to put to the test our faith in the eternal principles of justice and reason. One day, a King of France, (Louis XII.) reduced to the last shifts, either by his own profusion, or the dilapidations of his favourites, put up for sale—what? The administration of justice, or the power of pronouncing on the fortunes, lives, and honour of the citizens! An action more abominable in the eyes of God and man was never committed. Well, out of this sink of venality of judicial offices there suddenly sprung an admirable magistracy, the honour of France, the ornament of our history, a real tribe of Levi devoted to the service of justice, a political body proud and independent, which, in spite of its errors, its casual outbreaks of passion, and its occasional misgivings, is still one of the finest titles of glory which ancient France can boast of in the eyes of posterity. I perceive that you go along with me; that you assent to what I say; and now I ask you, what would you think of a minister who, on the strength of such an example, should again propose to set up justice to auction? The ministers can

no more create an English Aristocracy in France by means of the right of primogeniture, than they could reconstruct the old parliaments by the venality of judicial charges. The ways of God are inscrutable. Sometimes, in the midst of the follies, miseries, and even crimes of humanity, it pleases him to raise up wonderful things, which live their time, and are only seen once. But to fall again into the same errors, give ourselves up to the same disorders, in order to furnish God with an occasion of working a new miracle, would be a proceeding equally impious as insensate. Weak and ignorant as we are, we have only one guide in this world, conscience; and woe be to us if we do evil, under the pretext that Providence has always the power, and has sometimes the will, to bring good out of it.

COUNT MOLÉ (Minister of Justice under Napoleon, Prime Minister since 1830, again named in February 1848, and an extensive landed proprietor) said, that the Revolution had been made in order to obtain an equality of rights and the abolition of privileges, that the Charter had recognised this principle as the source of all justice and civilization, that civil privileges were intolerable, and that political ones only existed by way of exceptions or as institutions. When an Aristocracy exists, it may be preserved, because its abolition might lead to violence and injustice; but to re-establish it when once destroyed, can only be the work of time. Human things have two sources, force, and justice. The right of primogeniture was the result of force, but force does not constitute justice. At the present time, social superiorities are based on services rendered to the public, and on talents. The right of primogeniture interferes with the distributive justice amongst brothers; it would introduce privilege into the family, and destroy in the revolution all that is most pure in its principle.

If that privilege has been maintained in England, it is because the English Revolution did not change the civil laws, and merely modified for a time the political order of things.

The mobility and division of property have been objected to; but they have benefited the revenue. He denied that the law of an equal division broke down fortunes, seeing that what was taken away by such a mode of succession was made up by marriages and industry.

According to the Keeper of the Seals, it is the continuity and uniformity of its action which constitute the excellence of a monarchy; a consequence of which maxim would be, that a monarchical government would have no more natural stable supports than the monastic orders and convents. The reverse of

this is the case. A constitutional monarchy has need of mobility, in order to be able, without violent shocks, to follow the progress of society. The minister has said that we have need of institutions and magistracies; but if so, why does he not organize the communes and justices of the peace, and strengthen the peerage and courts of law? It is not by means of privileges bestowed on certain families that the stability of the monarchy can be promoted. The minister anticipates the period when, by the excessive division of property, there will scarcely be any electors, and when the monarchy will be destroyed. But I have no dread of such a sinister result, inasmuch as industry, which is constantly on the increase, agglomerates wealth, and monied fortunes naturally seek an investment in land. Still, one may ask if the permanency of great estates be a thing so very desirable, in itself. In England they have given rise to the Poor Laws. In 1814, the subdivision of the soil in France was deemed advantageous.

The law of primogeniture makes the paternal authority less respected, and stifles the voice of nature. It was in harmony with the ancient monarchy, as the present law is agreeable to the constitutional monarchy, inasmuch as it gives no preference, unless to the child who may be deemed deserving of it. The proposed law would operate blindly. The minister wishes to improve the manners; but if the manners are vicious, they will defeat a bad law. Fathers do not expect from it an increase of their authority; on the contrary, the eldest son will have a privilege which will render him odious to the rest of the family, without greatly enriching him. All its provisions are directed against the younger sons and daughters of a family, so that if the eldest son becomes monarchical, the others will constitute a formidable democracy. France would see its revenue diminished by the withdrawal from circulation of a third or a fourth of the soil. The speaker would vote against the law.

THE DUKE DE PASQUIER (Minister under the Empire, the Restoration, and since 1830, late Chancellor, or President of the Chamber of Peers), after showing that the law of an equal division was in conformity to that of nature, proceeded: Much stress has been laid on the evils accruing from the breaking down of properties. There are two extremes equally to be dreaded in this matter: the one that of a too great agglomeration of the soil; the other, its too great partition. As to the first, we have experience to guide us. In the time of Cicero it was admitted, that Rome, the centre of so much wealth and power, only contained twenty thousand proprietors. A short time after the

reign of Augustus, Pliny, whose authority is unquestionable, asserts, that the agglomeration of estates, after having destroyed Italy, would prove the ruin of all the countries subject to the Roman rule. In Spain, where entails have been permitted to all, and over real property of every description, and where religious corporations are so numerous, we see to what a height the evil has grown. The number of proprietors who now possess the Campagna of Rome and Sicily, is extremely small. That island, so long the granary of the Mediterranean, has in latter times been often seen not to produce corn sufficient for the support of its own population. We have been indeed met with the example of England, where for these fifty years the agglomeration of property has made rapid progress, and where agriculture is in a flourishing condition. But, in the first place, its population is supported by a foreign trade, great without an example, which renders the possession of the land a thing of minor importance. And then, that system, has it yet been properly tested and appreciated? England has already felt the consequences of it in a manner to excite the attention of its legislators and statesmen. The small holdings in that country have almost disappeared, and the population is obliged to crowd into the towns. If an unfortunate war, or a powerful foreign competition, should deprive its mass of operatives of the employment now furnished by industry and manufactures, what evils would not be seen to arise? If the agglomeration of property should go on increasing, the country will be deprived of the immense advantage of having proprietors of a middling order, who so well supply the place of justices of the peace, and preserve order and tranquillity in the country. In England this agglomeration is the effect of that increase of capital which has taken place within the last fifty years, and of laws which impose checks on the operation of entails. Why ought we not to wait till the increase of capital produce the same results in our own country?

What inconveniences, I ask, are at present felt from the breaking down of properties? We have had no evidence of their existence laid before us, and the discussion on the other side has proceeded entirely on hypothetical grounds. Although a number of causes have co-operated to check the progress of division, it must still be admitted that the number of proprietors has considerably increased. But is not this increase a benefit? It was seen to have been more difficult to stir up the lower classes from 1800 to 1825, than it was from 1764 to 1792. The old government was in a perpetual state of alarm by reason of the ever increasing mass of operatives. A trifling rise in the price of corn produced revolts, although at that period there were colonization, *lettres de cachet*, and asylums of labour, with a military organization,

provided by the state. See what has been effected since the ministry of the Duke de Choiseul, and during the last twenty-five years. Under the present system, which requires the keeping up of great armies, what security would there be for the peace of the country, if the nation were not restrained by a numerous proprietary class? But for the latter, could the disbanding of the army in 1815 have been effected without disorder? We ought, therefore, to take care how we lay a rash hand on what now exists.

Before it can be maintained that the creation of a privileged heir is necessary for the stability of the state, it must be shown that privileges are essential in a well constituted government, be it democratical, aristocratical, or monarchical; for, nothing is farther from being proved, than that a monarchy cannot accommodate itself to democratic institutions. Among the people of antiquity the paternal authority was unlimited, and co-existing with slavery, every head of a family necessarily possessed a power more extensive than he does at present. In Rome the patricians possessed the unlimited rights of a testator, but they were obliged to grant a *legitime* to their children; and at a later period, although recourse was had to entails, the law of an equal division in intestate successions always prevailed. Because entails were introduced under the emperors, the Keeper of the Seals has argued that they are a monarchical institution. But our monarchy has nothing in common with the despotic and military monarchies of Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero, where, if the concentration of property was great, the number of slaves was immense. Still, entails were not extended so as to embrace the fourth generation until the time of Justinian; and this law was not in conformity to the spirit of monarchy, but to that of an Aristocracy carried out to the last degree of corruption. What state underwent more revolutions than the Roman empire? The Roman law was maintained in the south of Europe and the south of France. The laws of the Lombards established the right of primogeniture for the nobility: they gave birth to the feudal system, and to an Aristocracy the most oppressive that ever existed, which inflicted on the human race subject to its iron rule a greater amount of misery than any other power.

COUNT ROY (Minister of Finance under the Restoration, who died in 1847, possessed of an immense fortune, chiefly in land) observed, That the law of primogeniture was unknown in the earliest times of the monarchy, and was the offspring of the feudal system. The new privilege now sought to be created is not demanded for political reasons, since it is *facultive*. In re-

gard to the alleged breaking down of property, no documents have been produced to prove it, although it would have been easy for ministers to furnish them, had such existed. Primogeniture would change the elements that compose, and ought to compose, the Chamber of Deputies; it would accelerate the partition of the soil, by conferring on the younger sons and daughters smaller portions of landed successions than they at present have; and, in place of founding a family, it would destroy it: the paternal authority would be impaired by a law which substituted its will for that of the head of the family.

England has been evoked; but that country has never changed its law of succession, and is still ruled by the laws which feudal and barbarous ages have handed down to it. Besides, England is not an agricultural country, like France; in it a fourth of the population is supported by Poor's Rates, which cost the landed proprietors two hundred millions of francs annually.

The DUKE DE CAZES (Minister of the Interior under the Restoration, minister since 1830, and late Grand Referendary of the Chamber of Peers) opposed the law. He had calculated the progress of division in the district where he resided, which is composed of 130 communes, much subdivided, and chiefly in vineyard. Two estates yield thirty thousand francs; there are a few of fifteen thousand, a small number of ten, and the greater part from two to three thousand, of yearly rent. All the inhabitants are proprietors, and the population is on the increase. The custom there is not to give a preference to one of the family, except occasionally amongst the peasants. During the last ten years, there has been an agglomeration, and not a subdivision, of the soil. In 1815, the number of parcels in the Tax Lists was forty-two thousand odd; in 1825, it was forty thousand, so that the agglomeration was at the rate of 2 in 40. While he was Minister of the Interior, from 1817 to 1820, the number of electors, in place of falling off, was augmented. It is the lowering of the land-tax that has already taken effect, and that proposed for 1827, that has diminished their number. The proprietor who in 1814 paid 300 francs of tax, now only pays 230, or a fourth less. The speaker believed that if the nation had been composed of unpropertied persons, it would not have made the progress it has done during the last thirty years. The concentration of property in the hands of twenty thousand individuals, as mentioned by Cicero, corrupted and ruined the Roman Republic. The Minister of the Interior asked if the Roman law was opposed to that of nature? It assuredly was so, seeing that it authorized a father

to sell his children. The speaker would vote for the rejection of the law, from the impossibility of amending it.

COUNT LANJUINAIS observed, As there exist in the physical world noxious substances which injure or destroy organized bodies, so are there found in the moral and political order of things disturbing institutions, which weaken and destroy states and governments. Under the last head may be classed the three privileges at present sought to be established, and even aggravated by means of entails. Thirty years ago, France succeeded in extirpating and ridding herself of these triple pests, which, nevertheless, it is now proposed to force back upon us.

Entails have been judged by the world, and have been alike repudiated by natural affection, by reason, and the experience of centuries; by these tribunals they have been irrevocably condemned. They have been recognised as social evils—as contrivances springing, as Montaigne says, from the ridiculous wish of *perpetuating our names*. Like other poisons, an entail is more or less pernicious according to the quantity administered; but, however small the dose, it is noxious—being injurious to the *institutes*, to the *substitutes*, to the whole family, and to society at large. For this reason an entail ends, or may be put an end to, in England as soon as the first *substitute* arrives at majority; and this is what the English point to as the perfection of a vicious institution!

Entails, even perpetual ones, did not save the Cæsars nor the patricians of Rome. Perpetual entails, conjoined with primogeniture and masculinity, did not preserve the feudal system and the ancient throne of France; and a sense of their evils at the time of the Revolution was one of the causes which led to the most terrible excesses on the part of the people.

No. II.

FRENCH LAW OF SUCCESSION VINDICATED, AND CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF BRITAIN, BY VARIOUS WRITERS.

It is an undoubted fact that in nine-twentieths of France, the lands cultivated with the greatest care and most successfully, are those which belong to small proprietors, who cultivate them themselves.

If we survey the cantons of the kingdom where the art of agriculture is in the most forward state, and the greatest produce is

obtained, such as Flanders and Alsace; if, passing the French frontiers, we observe the contiguous continental states, which furnish examples of a rich and prosperous husbandry, such as the best cultivated parts of Belgium, the Palatinate of the Rhine, or Switzerland, we shall find them invariably to be the countries where farming is practised on a small or middling scale.—*Agricultural Annals of Roville*, by M. DE DOMBASLE.

[This writer, from his numerous works on agriculture, and his exertions as a practical agriculturist, may be termed the Sir John Sinclair of France.]

Small properties tend incontestably to promote the rapid increase of the population; they are very favourable to the rearing of roots and garden-stuff, which, on a given surface, yield the greatest quantity of alimentary substances. It would be easy to prove that under the influence of the system of small properties carried out to its extreme limits, the soil of France is capable of nourishing ten times the number of inhabitants that it supports at present. * * * * We are entitled to believe, that in England, as in France, small properties would, under a system of entire freedom, gain ground over large estates. The English Aristocracy, however, look upon entails and primogeniture as the last and strongest bulwark of their power and existence. They are sensible that, if things were left to their natural course, the superiority of small properties would be rendered evident. The very policy which they pursue proves the inferiority of the present system, and shows that, under one of entire freedom, they would be unable to sustain a competition with small proprietors.—*Political Manual*, by V. GUICHARD. Chapter, *Division of Property*. 1 vol. Paris. 1842.

But the fallen dynasty, being suspected of the design of re-establishing the aristocracy of the soil, found itself hampered in carrying out measures which would have been favourable to agriculture. Since the revolution of 1830, a greater freedom of action has been acquired, and it is since then that it has made the most rapid advances. Its progress has been such since 1789 that its produce has increased forty per cent. The greatest share in this increase is attributable to the sub-division of the soil among a greater number of persons, who cultivate, if not with greater science, at least with more energy, and a stricter regard to economy; to the sale of the properties of the emigrants; to the reclamation of waste lands; to the more general cultivation of potatoes, brought about chiefly by the influence of Parmen-

tier; to the introduction of artificial grasses; to the improvements in the breeds of live-stock, and the rearing of domestic animals; to the increase of merinos; and, finally, to the exertions made by scientific agriculturists, especially Mathieu de Dombasle, to propagate sound agricultural doctrines. At the present day, the onward movement of agriculture continues to take place on all points of the territory, and is perhaps more rapid than in any other country.—*Patria; or, an Encyclopædia of France*. By a Society of Savans. Article, *Agriculture*, by JUNG. Paris. 1847.

MR LAING, speaking of the law of equal division in successions in operation in France, which the *Edinburgh Review* (for 1823, "On the French Law of Succession,") predicted would turn that country into "a great pauper warren," says:—France owes her present prosperity and rising industry to this very system of subdivision of property, which allows no man to live in idleness, and no capital to be employed without a view to its reproduction, and places that great instrument of industry and well-being in the hands of all classes. The same area of arable land, according to Dupin, feeds now a population greater by eight millions, and certainly in greater abundance and comfort, than under the former system of succession. In this view, the comparison between the old feudal construction of society in France, and the new under the present law of succession, resolves itself into this result: *that one-third more people are supported under the new, in greater abundance and comfort, from the same extent of arable land.* * * * Minute labour on small portions of arable land, gives evidently, in equal soils and climates, a superior productiveness where these small portions belong in property, as in Flanders, Holland, Friesland, and Ditchmarsh in Holstein, to the farmers. It is not pretended by our agricultural writers that our large farms, even in Berwickshire, Roxburghshire, or the Lothians, approach to the *garden-like cultivation*, attention to manures, drainage, and clean state of land, or in productiveness from a small space of soil not originally rich, which distinguish the small farmers of Flanders and their system.—*Notes of a Traveller*. By S. LAING, Esq.

I have long had a suspicion that Cobbett's complaints of the degradation and sufferings of the poor in England contained much truth, though uttered by him in the worst possible spirit. It is certain that the peasantry here, (in Tuscany, where the French law of succession exists) are much more generally the

proprietors of their lands than with us ; and I believe them to be much more independent and in easier circumstances. This is, as I believe, the grand reason why so many attempts at revolution have failed in these countries. A revolution would benefit the lawyers, the savans, the merchants, bankers, and shopkeepers ; but I do not see what the labouring classes would gain by it : for them the work has been done already, in the destruction of the feudal nobility and great men ; and, in my opinion, this blessing is enough to compensate the evils of the French Revolution ; for the good endures, while the effects of the massacres and devastations are fast passing away.—DR. ARNOLD'S *Correspondence*. Vol. i. p. 66.

The law of an equal division has given a great impulse to industry and the accumulation of wealth. The frequent transfer of land, while it enriches the treasury, has facilitated the adjustment of boundaries. If many large properties have been divided, a great number have also been recomposed : the economy of some has made up for the prodigality of others. Every individual has been prosperous or the reverse, not by chance or the accident of birth, but by means of his own industry or idleness, virtues or misconduct. Owing to the same cause, we have seen our towns embellished, our arts perfected, our dwelling houses better constructed and more commodious ; in fine, the effect of this law has been to regenerate and transform the entire nation, and to make the people better educated, more intelligent, active, and moral.—*On the Law of Primogeniture*. By M. DUPIN, Procureur General before the Court of Cassation, and late President of the Chamber of Deputies. 1 vol. Paris. 1826.

Of all the extraordinary changes which have taken place in our time, the most extensive and complete is doubtless that which in France has renewed the constitution of civil society. The Revolution has consummated the work begun eighteen hundred years ago by Religion, and rendered equal before the law the men whom Christianity rendered equal before God. To efface from the soil all trace of the ancient inequalities ; to abolish in families the privileges founded on the priority of birth and the superiority of sex ; to recognise the same rights in those who, sprung from the same stock, ought to be the objects of the same affection ; to suppress in the state the difference of classes, and to submit the entire of a great nation to a just and uniform rule ; not only to proclaim this mighty equality, but to organize it, to divide property, extend well-being, honour labour, and to assign

to the rights of each no other limits than the rights of all ;—this is what has resulted from that revolution, which has placed society in France at the head of all the societies of Europe, and has rendered it the most happy, as well as the most advanced, amongst them. * * *

In appropriating the labours of our great jurists, Domat and Pothier, the authors of our codes, true to the spirit of the Revolution, bestowed on renovated France a system of laws, the clearest and the most just which any country ever possessed. "They gave it," I borrow the eloquent words of Portalis, "with that wisdom which presides over durable institutions, and agreeably to the principles of that natural equity of which human legislators ought merely to be the respectful interpreters." In this manner they founded that beautiful civil order of things towards which mankind had for a long time been advancing, and which a people placed at their head had now so happily arrived at ; I say so happily, for I am not one of those who dread that, in perfecting itself, the world draws nearer to its dissolution, and that the best ought to be viewed as the beginning of the worst. I do not believe that families can suffer by the affectionate equality established among children, that society experiences less security where the individual enjoys a greater well-being, and that more equity in the relations of private life can conduct the state to greater disorder. No. Liberty acquired to labour, protection afforded to weakness, the essentials of contracts clearly defined, property more diffused, wealth better distributed, families more united, the nation more homogeneous, all tend to augment the strength of the country, and to confirm it in that universal civil peace, which constitutes the objects and the blessings of laws. We should be blind and ungrateful if the inconstancy of our desires, and the restlessness of our minds, made us possess without a fervid attachment what our fathers strove after with so much enthusiasm.—*Eloge of Merlin of Douai*, the framer of the Law of Successions, contained in "Notices of Historical Memoirs," by M. MIGNET, Perpetual Secretary of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris. 1843.

A revolution in a country where property is unequally divided is frightful. The whole order of society is subverted ; power passes into the hands of the masses, who possess the physical force, and have greatly suffered while want has kept them in a state of ignorance ; they are thus the enemies of all law, distinctions, and property of every kind. France underwent such a revolution at a time when the great body of the people were strangers to property, and consequently to the blessings of civiliza-

tion. But that revolution, amidst a deluge of evils, has left behind it many great advantages; and one of the greatest, perhaps is the assurance that a similar scourge can never return. The revolution has prodigiously increased the number of peasant-proprietors. It is computed that there are at the present day three millions of families in France who are absolute masters of the soil which they live upon; and this supposes more than fifteen millions of people. Thus, there is more than the half of the nation personally and on its own account interested in all the rights of the community. The multitude and the physical force are on the same side with order; and if the present government should fall to pieces, the masses themselves would hasten to re-establish another that would protect property and public order. Such is the grand cause of the difference between the revolutions of 1814, 1815, 1830, and that of 1789.—*New Principles of Political Economy*. By M. de Sismondi. 2d edition. 2 vols. Paris. 1837.

During the period which preceded the Revolution, cultivation was co-ordinated with large estates, and received the name of farming on a great scale. Men then flattered themselves, that they would thus enjoy the same advantages which manufacturers derived from machinery; and they no doubt succeeded in reducing the expense of production, by diminishing the number of labourers; but if this method increased the wealth of the great proprietors, it produced a numerous body of indigent labourers, placed extreme opulence by the side of extreme misery, and was equally prejudicial to private as to general interests.

However habitually inclined great proprietors may be to set no bounds to their expenses, and however often their extravagance may place them in difficulties, it is certain that their expenses are of a nature little calculated to encourage cultivation, general industry, and commerce; and that, in the long run, they merely produce a species of prosperity, superficial, local, and circumscribed. Experience shows us, that industrial wealth is the effect and the cause of a better distribution of landed property; and that it is to their mutual action that we are indebted for the increase of the middling ranks, and of mercantile and manufacturing capital. In a word, with a small number of rich proprietors, who prefer domestic enjoyments and territorial influence, the power of producing would be greater than the desire of consuming, and the increase of wealth would be arrested by the insufficiency of the demand or the want of consumers.

It is not so when the land is divided into properties adapted

to small capitals, and is within the reach of a great number of persons.

The more property is divided, the better is it cultivated; the more productive it is, the more the cultivator and owner are at their ease. The more able they are to pay for the productions of industry and commerce, the more the general production is encouraged; and this encouragement arises not from the consumption of a small number of *rich* proprietors, but from the easy condition of the whole population. In this state of things, production, population, and consumption, keep pace with each other, and the general wealth reaches the highest point possible. There is no reason to fear that the indefinite subdivision of property will draw after it such an undue increase of the population, that to protect it against poverty and misery, the most abundant production would be insufficient. This would be a deplorable result, and one subversive of all progress in wealth and civilization—it would be the monster evil of small properties—but has it actually been found to exist? [The author shows the contrary at some length.]

If then the division of the soil into small portions has in it nothing hurtful to the social state, and if we have even the strongest reason to presume that it will ever prove conducive to wealth and civilization, there ought to be no longer a question about its influence on the political condition of the community. The political state is made for the social; and if it has been demonstrated, that the indefinite division of property is promotive of the happiness and well-being of a people,—increases its prosperity and riches, and ameliorates the general condition of the species,—I do not see what political interest a government *ought to have* to make laws for favouring the concentration of land.

I will say more :—if the interest of the powers that be were in opposition to that of civil society, there cannot be a doubt that these powers would soon be compelled to follow and obey the social movement. Let us interrogate, on this subject, the history of the middle ages and that of the present time; and we shall see written on every page the fact, of power either voluntarily gravitating towards the social declivity, or offering to that tendency an unavailing resistance. For a long time territorial property was the exclusive patrimony of privileged families; capitalists could not acquire an interest in it except through the favour of the prince, or by paying a high sum to the fisk; its possession was besides only that of a life-renter, obliged at his death to restore it to his family. It was impossible, as appears to me, to raise stronger barriers against the partition of land; and still were they thrown down, even previous to our Revolution.

Balanced by the riches of industry and trade, property in land no longer commanded any peculiar respect, but, being classed with that of the other, produced the same political and social effects. Have we not here then an incontrovertible proof of the present identity of personal and territorial wealth?—and do we not make an egregious mistake, when we speak of the great interests of the state and of civil society as dependent either on the concentration or the subdivision of the soil?—*Analytical Dictionary of Political Economy*. By M. GAILLIE, Deputy. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1826.

As soon as a pure despotism becomes impossible, an aristocracy is a real curse; and this explains why certain people in modern times, such as the Danes, in order to rid themselves of it, have consented to make incredible sacrifices. The question as to the comparative value of a pure despotism and an aristocracy is, at the present day, absolutely futile. I defy the absolute power of one to exist for ten years longer in any enlightened country. Buonaparte himself was unable, either entirely to acquire it, or to make it last; and I defy the aristocracy to prolong its existence for another half-century.

The English constitution is a constant subject of admiration with Madame de Stäel. I am far from denying how much we owe to that constitution, whose name alone has rendered important services to liberty. France, in believing to imitate it, has acquired institutions infinitely better, and a liberty far more real. We have genuine elections in place of rotten boroughs. We are preserved from the concentration of property, which is the source of misery and the certain parent of revolutions.*.—*Literary and Political Miscellanies*. By BENJAMIN CONSTANT. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1829.

With the law of primogeniture, a real elective and representative system is impossible; and so long as this law shall exist among them, I defy the English to operate, on their representative system, any reform which will be effectual against extravagance and corruption. See, on the other hand, what guarantees for order and liberty result from the principle adopted by the

* The time of dependent inferior classes is past, like that of serfs and vassals. The division of property, that great scandal in the eyes of the English—that phenomenon which their travellers are unable to reconcile with the present prosperity of France—the division of property will take place in England, and will be effected either by the repeal of the existing laws which prevent it, or by cruel spoliations, and laws sanctioning them.

Constituent Assembly in the Law of Succession. Its action maintains and constantly extends equality by the division of property; the independence of the people is increased by the easiness of their condition; the blessings of education are spread over millions of individuals formerly plunged in the deepest ignorance, and bent under the yoke of the darkest superstition. These admirable results have been powerfully promoted by the sale of the state property, and by the amount of capital employed in the purchase, in lots, of the dismembered estates. In this lies the glory of the Constituent Assembly; it is under this point of view that France offers the most encouraging spectacle; it is thus that her aspect refutes the base calumnies of the interested partisans of a system of corruption, who represent to us the people as expecting with impatience the time when they shall again be thrown back amidst the anarchy and disorders of 1793. I cite such in judgment before the bar of their country;—I challenge them to show the most distant analogy between the nation such as it was forty years ago, composed of privileged tyrants and oppressed masses, animated by hatred and meditating revenge, and that population of our own day attached to their country by the ties of property, born and trained for freedom upon a soil disencumbered of feudal shackles, and filled with the sentiment of that national glory acquired by so many victories, the least of which might have given lustre to all the emblazonments of Europe.—*Letter to General Lafayette, by GENERAL ARTHUR C. O'CONNOR*, (a naturalized Frenchman, resident in France since 1800, and the owner of a great estate in that country).* 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1831.

Whatever revolutions may take place in a country, society remains nearly the same, if, when the political institutions are changed, the civil laws are not also modified.

Scarcely had Charles II. mounted the royal throne, than English society, for an instant thrown out of its channel, fell back into it, and no vestige of the revolution was seen. Twelve years of reforms, violence, and *coups d'état*, had passed off like a storm, of which a day of calm weather is sufficient to efface the traces. In France, on the contrary, in spite of the political forms which the old society sought to revive, another people is revealed to our view; it matters not under what names these forms appear,—republic, empire, or monarchy,—monarchical France of 1789 has become democratical, and will never cease to be otherwise. How is it that this difference is so great in its

* The author is about to publish a systematic work, on the Law of Succession in France.

effects, when the causes appear to be alike? It is because in England, when the rage of political destruction was at its height, the reformers did not touch the civil laws—they struck down royalty, and left intact the law of primogeniture; whilst in France a change was effected, at one and the same time, both in the civil and political order of things. In it, the work of social reform even preceded the revolutionary crisis. The laws which abolished the feudal servitudes of land, those which substituted in successions equality for privilege, had all been decreed simultaneously with the republic. These laws riveted themselves in the heart of society—in all that is most unchallengeable among a people,—namely, the soil, and the relations of family. “The republic passed away, the civil laws remained,” &c.—*Ireland, Social, Political, and Religious*. By GUSTAVE DE BEAUMONT, Deputy. Fourth edition, 2 vols. Paris. 1841.

According to this theory, (that advanced by Arthur Young, and adopted by Macculloch,) wherever there is a very large property, land ought to be better cultivated than it is upon a very small one,—and yet, make the comparison in France, and you will generally find, as I have said in the case of Normandy, that the very small property is, to say the least, as well cultivated as the very large one.

According to this theory, the more the soil of France has been divided, the worse the soil of France ought to be cultivated; and yet with the division of the soil in France has advanced the art of cultivation. M. Dombasle states, “Comfort is now much greater in all classes, and consumption has increased in a greater proportion than the population.”

It is not that the division of property itself is favourable to the cultivation of land, but that it is and has been accompanied by circumstances more than sufficient to counterbalance the disadvantages likely to proceed from it.

In the first place, we must not forget, that with the extinction of a great landed aristocracy, were destroyed, beyond the possibility of revival, all those feudal privileges and disastrous imposts, under which France before the Revolution was weighed down.

In the second, we must remember that every thing in a country is affected by the presiding spirit of a country;—the individual receives a magnetic force from the impulse that is affecting the community. *In the democracy of property, the poor proprietor has an energy which the great proprietor wants.*

Among any people this would be the case, but particularly among the French; for among the French, the division of pro-

perty has given to an old and powerful passion a new and profitable vent.

Through the dark streets of Paris rattled the emblazoned coach, and along the broad road to Versailles behold the splendidly-liveried and gaily-caparisoned equipages of the embroidered and brocaded court !

How was the vanity of the great proprietor displayed ? In the wanton and extravagant expenditure of his property. How is the vanity of the small landed proprietor displayed ? In the daily and difficult accumulation of his property. The law of equal succession may not have created a new sentiment, but it has engaged, I repeat, an ancient one in a new direction. The small proprietor, in defiance of many rules which condemn him to increasing poverty, struggles on to increasing wealth ; his land, which should be badly cultivated, is well cultivated, because it is cultivated with ardour. If he ought not to be able to manure it, he does manure it, because he dreams, he lives, he breathes for it ; because he collects every bit of dung, and turns every bit of bone to advantage. He rises at four o'clock to cultivate his own strip of ground, when he would not rise till six to cultivate the ground of a master. All his energies are developed in a bad system of agriculture, and thus it becomes a good one.

[The effects of the law of equal succession, giving a father a power by testament to benefit one of his children to an extent which can in no case exceed a half, are thus stated.]

The effects of this law are :—

1st. To make the child independent of his father's aversion, but expectant from his father's love.

2d. To make the parent depend, for the extent of his power, on the extent of his family ; and as the greatness of the one is measured by the smallness of the other, a powerful check is created to an overabundant population.

Thus, the same law which provides for the support of the child, provides also for the authority of the father ; and while it tends to the division of property, contains a principle intended for its limitation. Nor is this all ; exactly as the authority of the father requires strengthening, the division of property becomes strong.

We see then that the law of France possesses, even in its letter, a notable provision against the mischiefs which it is conceived likely to produce. But it is not only in the letter of the law that we are to look for its effects,—the *spirit* of a law which *diffuses property*, is to give a desire to *increase and to retain property*.

The pauper and the beggar have no restraint put upon their passions, and they propagate their species with the recklessness

of men who have no hope in the future, and only one present pleasure to enjoy. The peasant, who has a small piece of land, lives under the increasing desire to increase and to transmit that land. He receives four acres from his father, he toils incessantly till he can acquire eight; and it is not often that he increases his family beyond the ratio at which his property has increased.

The increase of the population in France has not only been less than the increase of population in the other great countries of Europe; it has been less, as I have once before had occasion to observe, than the increase of every other species of power and wealth in France itself.

Besides, in the law of division resides, to a certain extent, the law of union. If the father gives a portion to his daughter, the son receives a portion with his wife; and as marriages in France are regulated in some degree by interest, what goes away on one side returns in a great measure on the other.

Among the old nobility who rescued any property from the revolution of 1789, you will usually find that property rather to have augmented than diminished, during the last twenty years.

Among the peasantry who have obtained any property by their toil, you will usually find, not perhaps the identical property which the father possessed, but a property equal to it, in the hands of the son.

The cases where property multiplies its divisions are, where many new properties start up from one large property being sold. But as, even in these cases, the persons who purchase the land are for the most part those who already possess it, twenty estates are increased, to ten that are created.

There are many feelings, then, which arise from the disposal of landed property in small divisions, which are in themselves inimical to its indefinite subdivision. There are likewise circumstances directly opposed to such a system of small divisions, which tend to moderate their excess.

Any person travelling over France will observe, though the system of division may not in every identical instance be exactly regulated, as M. de Morel Vende supposes, by its advantages, that it is carried to a far greater extent in those places, and under those circumstances, where it is less calculated to be prejudicial, or most calculated to be the reverse.—As in vineyards for instance:—

Hectares.

The quantity of land in which wine is now cultivated . 2,017,667
The number of proprietors 2,184,015

Here the land is almost in its extreme division—but why?—The quantity of land thus cultivated has only been increased by one quarter since 1798; the value of the produce has doubled.

"The division of lands will vary according to their situation," say the Reports of the Chief Geometer of the Cadastre. Thus in some places, where division is not disadvantageous, property will be exceedingly divided; so in others, where great division will be ruinous, it will not take place. Now, there is a much smaller portion of France where a very minute division of property is possible, than where a tendency to agglomeration is prescribed. — *The Monarchy of the Middle Classes—France, Social, Literary, and Political*, (Second Series.) By HENRY LYTTON BULWER, Esq. M.P., late Secretary to the British Embassy in Paris. 1836.

In England the number of proprietors has been computed at 250,000 (much over stated), and a third of the property of the soil is concentrated in the hands of an aristocracy few in number. In France, thanks to the Revolution of 1789, and to our law of succession, we have several millions of proprietors. This fact explains the difference between the electoral systems of the two countries.

I have shown the admirers of the English system that, in spite of its million of voters, it is more aristocratic than ours, and that our Chamber of Deputies is ten times more democratic in its elements than the reformed House of Commons.

In France, we behold few unpropertied operatives; an aristocracy, if one can be said to exist at all, without influence; a numerous middle class, interested in the maintenance of the established order of things, ready to support it in the elections, and to defend it in the National Guard; in England, an aristocracy whose power is unbounded, and a myriad of unpropertied operatives. In England, a struggle incessant, desperate, and rancorous; in France, a revolution begun in 1789, and terminated in 1830.

In England, do the causes of an impending revolution exist? I fear it, although such a catastrophe is not inevitable. The English aristocracy is more prudent and enlightened than was that of France in 1789. The House of Commons has more experience than our first National Assemblies had; while the English people are more cautious and less excitable than the French.—*Examination of the Electoral Systems in England and France*. By A. JOLLIVET, Deputy and Advocate. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1836.

[The author of this work lost his life in the Revolution of February 1848.]

It follows from what has been said, that political liberty, which is always in proportion to the freedom with which property circulates, must necessarily become greater in France than in all the other countries of Europe, including England, where, as in the rest of them, property has not been freed from the shackles with which rulers have thought fit to encumber it.—*On the Influence of the Distribution of Wealth on Society.* By VISCOUNT DE LAUNNAY. Paris. 1830.

It was the law of succession that gave to equality its final consummation. I am astonished that publicists, both ancient and modern, have not attributed to the laws of succession a greater influence on the progress of human affairs. By means of them man is armed with a power almost divine over the future destiny of his species. Let the legislator once regulate the successions of his fellow-citizens, and he may repose himself for centuries; the movement once imparted to his work, he may withdraw his hand from it; the machine acts by its own impulsive power, and, unguided, proceeds in the given direction. Constructed in a certain manner, it unites, concentrates, and groups property, and soon after, power, round certain individuals, and causes an aristocracy to spring, as it were, out of the soil. Fashioned on a different principle, it divides, breaks down, and disseminates property and power.—*On Democracy in America.* By A. DE TORQUEVILLE, Deputy. Paris. 1838.

It is not my province to inquire if, in point of right, a man has the power of disposing of a property after he shall cease to exist, in favour of another not yet in existence, nor to examine the political consequences which such a right draws after it; but its economical effects are detestable. (Here the author quotes from Adam Smith and Sismondi.) Since Smith wrote this passage, the feudal usages in Scotland have undergone a material change. Still the people of the British islands have, generally speaking, suffered extensively from the agglomeration of property.

On the whole, it may be said that an unequal division in families, and the rights attached to primogeniture, condemn the eldest sons to inactivity, and the younger to the same from their want of capital.

Finally, the law of primogeniture has become much less fatal since, from the increased wealth of nations, the greater part of it has come to consist of personal property; and it is very fortunate that the latter cannot be subjected to entails, but is beyond

the reach of those unjust laws whose object is to advantage one member of a family to the injury of the rest.—*A Complete Course of Practical Political Economy*. By JEAN BAPTISTE SAY. 2 vols. Paris. 1840.

Napoleon might have insisted on the great benefits that had accrued to France from the establishment of uniform laws, which protect alike all classes of men; and he might have virtually pledged himself to the subversion of the feudal inequalities which still disfigure Europe. He might have insisted on the favourable changes to be introduced into property by abolishing the entails which followed it; the right of primogeniture, and the exclusive privileges of a haughty aristocracy.—Dr. CHANNING. *Character of Napoleon Bonaparte*.

That the existing inequality of property is a great moral and political evil, has been attempted to be shown in a preceding chapter. The means of diminishing this inequality, which were there urged as an obligation of private life, are not likely to be fully effectual so long as the law encourages its continuance. I can discover no conceivable reason why, because one brother is born a twelvemonth before another, he should possess ten times as much property as the younger. Affection dictates equality, and in such cases the dictate of affection is commonly the dictate of reason. Civil laws ought, as moral guides of the community, to discourage great inequality of property. The partial distribution of intestate estates is only an evil of casual operation; but the laws which make certain estates inalienable, or, which is not very different, allow the present possessor to entail them, is constant and habitual.—*Essays on the Principles of Morality, &c.* By JONATHAN DYMOND. 1834.

In this respect (the subdivision of property) France, more equitable than England, has also shown herself more politic. While our laws favour, by a continual action, the accumulation of landed property, hers, on the contrary, tend to a perpetual subdivision of it. It is possible that the system in France may not be confined within proper bounds; but even were it carried to an extreme, it is less prejudicial than the opposite one.—SIR WALTER SCOTT. *Miscellaneous Works*.

Everything that separates men in place of uniting them, is an evil, inasmuch as it generates on the one side pride, and on the other envy. In this point of view, hereditary distinctions, privilege, and titles, are immoral institutions. From how many bad feelings is not man preserved, when we banish from his heart the sentiments of jealousy and humiliation !

The laws which provide for an equal division in successions among co-heirs are not only strictly just in themselves, but have a powerful moral tendency. " For," as Mad. de Staël says, " what is necessary in every case has something revolting in it, when it is measured out by those who possess a superfluity of the good things of life. Not only have all men a right to what is necessary for their subsistence, but we cannot, without being guilty of injustice, refuse them a share of those enjoyments arising from the exercise of the affections and the imagination which education and a certain degree of enlightenment procure."

The principle of free states is civil equality, which is not opposed to the most marked distinctions among men created by talents and virtue ; but it admits of no other.—*Morality applied to Politics*. By E. JOURG, Member of the Institute. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris. 1822.

Accumulation should be stopped in no arbitrary way, but by the non-allowance of a custom, if it be only a custom—a repeal of the law, if it be a law, of primogeniture, which tends to a universal depravation of manners, which alienates the heart of brother from brother ; which marks one out for a condition of ease and luxury, and either throws the others upon hard exertion, or else, by quartering them upon the public in different departments, in that way corrupts them and injures the public. We profess to venerate the Bible : now, the Mosaic institutes allowed no accumulation of land. The accumulations of property among ourselves, while they raised princely fortunes on the one hand, by the mere lapse of time and tendency to growth, on the other preserve the misery and wretchedness to which they offer so striking a contrast, and which we cannot believe to be a law of nature and society ; which we cannot think, with Sir Robert Peel, belongs to the progress of civilization, which should soothe these inequalities rather than aggravate them.—*Lectures to the Working Classes*. By W. J. FOX, M.P. *Lecture No. 15*.

Early in the revolutionary war, Jefferson succeeded in repealing this colonial law (the English law of entail) and he also soon after obtained an abrogation of the law of primogeniture (now abrogated in all the states of the Union). The effect of the change has been

great, and has spread universally in Virginia. Men's disposition of their property has followed the legal provision; no one now thinks of making his eldest son his general heir; a corresponding division of wealth has taken place; there is no longer a class living in luxurious indulgence, while others are dependent and poor. It is affirmed with equal confidence, that though the class of over-refined persons has been exceedingly curtailed, if not extirpated, the number of well educated persons has been incalculably increased; nor does a session pass without disclosing talents which, sixty or seventy years ago, would have been deemed so rare as to carry a name from north to south of the Union.—
LORD BROUGHAM. *Sketch of the late President Jefferson.*

The division of property which has taken place on all points of the territory, has been productive of a general and uniformly diffused comfort. It has ministered to the well-being and the health of a great number of families who were formerly destitute of these blessings. On the other hand, the progress of industry has supplied work to a number of operatives. "In contemplating the immense progress that France has made in Agriculture, &c." (See extract from Mr. Laing's work.)—*Productive and Commercial Powers of France*, by BARON C. DUPIN. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris. 1827.

It is to the state of the manners and of society, more than to the text of the civil laws, that we must attribute the increasing subdivision of property. The sale of the state domains, and the extensive sequestration of private properties, were, no doubt, direct means by which large masses of property were broken down. But other causes are now in operation tending to the same result.

The man who tills the ground, who has no other occupation or habits, counts his labour as nothing: it is life—his meat and drink. When, therefore, he finds himself possessed of a small capital, and sees a piece of land for sale within the reach of his means, he has, over another offerer who does not work with his own hands, an advantage equal to the whole value of his labour. If the gross return from the land is 10 per cent., and if 5 per cent. is the cost of its cultivation, the operative calculates that the whole return will be his, and he accordingly gives more for the land than the mere capitalist, who would only draw a net profit of 5 per cent: he finds more security and independence in thus paying himself for the value of his labour, than in depending upon another for precarious employment and uncertain wages.

The merit of the civil code which rules us lies in its adaptation to our present state of society, and in being in every respect chalked out in conformity to our manners and existing wants : it has thus received the best and most infallible of all sanctions, that of universal assent.

The opposing example of England has been cited ; but is it so very seductive ? Do we not see prudent men alarmed at the excessive concentration of wealth in that country, and of its seven millions of unpropertied operatives, whom the propertied classes are bound to provide for under the penalty of being devoured by them ?—enemies who must be bought off either by wages, or by a poor-tax, which is no other than a species of tribute, destined by a civilized nation to appease the barbarians that threaten its destruction.—*The Communes and the Aristocracy*, by M. DE BARANTE, Peer of France, author of the "History of the Dukes of Burgundy," of "The Literature of the Eighteenth Century;" and late Ambassador at St. Petersburg. 1 vol. 8vo. 1821.

Without doubt, the difference between the Revolutions in England and France is great, and deserves to be taken into account ; it is especially striking when we consider the two revolutions in themselves as isolated events, in detaching them from general history, and, if I may so speak, assigning to each its proper physiognomy and character. But let them resume their place in the history of ages—let us see what they have done for the development of European civilization—and we shall find that the resemblance appears and rises above all their disparities. Engendered by the same causes—by the decay of the feudal aristocracy, of the church, and of royalty—they worked for the same end, namely, for the domination of the people in public affairs : they contended for liberty against absolute power, for equality against privilege, for progressive and general interests against those that were stationary and individual. Their situations were different, their forces unequal ; what the one clearly conceived, the other had only a crude conception of ; in the career run by the one, the other soon stopped short ; upon the same battle-field the one found victory, the other defeat ; the one sinned by its *cynisme*, the other by its hypocrisy ; the one was more prudent, the other more powerful :—but their means and their success have alone varied ; their tendency was the same in its origin ; their desires, efforts, and progress, were directed to the same end : what the one attempted or accomplished, the other accomplished or tried. Although guilty of religious persecution, the English Revolution saw the standard of the liberty of conscience unfurled in its ranks. In spite of its aristocratical

alliances, it founded the preponderance of the Commons. More occupied with civil order than with any thing else, it has, nevertheless, demanded a simpler system of laws, parliamentary reform, the abolition of entails and of the right of primogeniture; and, although yet balked in the attainment of these objects, it has still caused an immense step to be made in getting out of the feudal regime. So great, indeed, is the analogy betwixt the two Revolutions, that the first would not have been understood if the other had not broken out.—*History of the English Revolution*. By M. Guizot, late Prime Minister. 2 vols. 8vo. 1841.

The second grand event that characterizes the nineteenth century is the decline of the European aristocracies. It is long since this change commenced; it has been going on for centuries; and to say that it belongs to our epoch, can only mean that its effects have now become more marked and palpable. It is still far from being consummated, inasmuch as the English and German Aristocracies yet send forth vigorous branches from their secular stems. In Spain, Portugal, and Italy, the aristocracies are only so many fading reminiscences of the past, illustrious names engraven on tombs. In France, Aristocracy is so completely effaced from the scene, that as often as it wishes to emerge a little from its obscurity, it is forced to seek alliances with the middle class.

It is to the almost universal decay of that illustrious order, the support, ornament, and glory of the ancient monarchies, that the greater part of the states of Europe are indebted for the progress they have made in public liberty. Royalty has been obliged to yield up to Democracy whatever powers it wrested from the nobility.

Aristocracies contributed much to give stability and endurance to the states which they ruled. It was an imposing spectacle which this order presented—the flower of society, the ornament of the throne, the model of grace and honour, the tradition and promise of glory, the visible personification of the highest and most refined genius of an epoch. Even at the present day we feel half inclined to regret the fall of those noble families, that could only flourish and prosper at the expense of the rest of the nation; who thought that they owed a duty to their names, who infused a spirit of constancy and generosity into their policy, and afforded to mankind the hope of keeping up and preserving, as an object of pride and emulation, the most perfect image of their species. But reflection, enlightened by justice, speedily dissipates such idle regrets. In the eyes of our common Father all flesh is equally precious. The Aristocracy, doubtless, presented

itself as a brilliant decoration, but how many wretched beings had to support the expense of such a spectacle! It is true that the nation, considered only in this *élite*, was strong, opulent, and glorious. But societies were not formed in order to shed a vain lustre on the earth, to raise up ambitious rivalries, to gain battles, and to acquire a name in history. The object of societies is to obtain for men, with an equality equal to our souls before God, the greatest amount of virtue, knowledge, and felicity. It is not that phantom without a substance, which is at once everybody and nobody, that ideal called the Nation, which should profit by the wisdom of the laws. The object of societies is the well-being of every mind and every heart, called into existence for a brief space here below, and making part of that great human family, of which each member is immortal. The existence of aristocratic castes was clearly incompatible with an equitable distribution of power, wealth, and happiness; for it was only upon the ruins of the privileges of birth that the new legislation was founded, which has led to a more just division of political rights, a more general equality before the law, a partition of property more based on personal merit and activity, and a more fraternal charity towards the poorer orders, who, so long kept out of view, although they are the most numerous body, will in future occupy near to the middle classes, the place which the latter held near to the nobility.—*The Genius of the Nineteenth Century, or a Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind from 1800 to the present time.* By E. ALLETZ. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1848.

The compulsory division of the estates of the nobility among their peasants, effected by Hardenberg, for indemnities to be either fixed by the parties or the state, has gradually converted the ancient serfs into an industrious order of small proprietors, to whom agriculture is indebted for considerable improvements. Are we, therefore, wrong in believing that a similar measure applied to Ireland would reconstitute property in that miserable country, and give an interest in the soil to a population of Helots, that have become brutalized and supine from being exposed to all kinds of privations? When the object in view is to do good, the conditions of nations are not so different as some have supposed. It may be confidently asserted, that wherever the peasantry are without property, misery and crime will not be long in showing themselves. The expropriation of the Fellahs of Egypt has made a desert of that country, once the granary of Greece and Rome: at present, the country of shepherds procures its cattle from Asia Minor. The only means, I repeat, which remains for England to relieve Ireland and save herself, is to

declare every tenant the proprietor, in whole or in part, of the land which he cultivates, on payment of a certain yearly sum to the original owner. This done, the state ought then to interpose, and, by means of banks of credit, aid the cultivator in procuring the necessary funds for improving his land and redeeming his ground-rent, so that within a given time there may be none but freeholders in Ireland. Such a measure is not chimerical, seeing that it is exactly what Prussia organized and has constantly carried out during the last forty years.—*Prussia, Historical view of its Historical and Social progress.* By A. MOREAU DE JONNES. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1848.

The majority of living writers, with certain exceptions, form a new school, as distant from the Utopias of Quesnay, as the rigour of Malthus; and I see, with a philosophic and patriotic satisfaction, that this school has taken its rise in France, and that it is nearly wholly composed of Frenchmen. It is this school which will trace the march of political economy during the nineteenth century. It no longer wishes to consider production as an abstraction independent of the condition of the operatives; it is not enough for it that wealth should be created, but that it should be equitably distributed: in its eyes all men are really equal before the law as before God; the poor are not a text for declamation, but a part of the great human family claiming our deepest solicitude. It takes the world as it is, and knows how to stop short within the limits of the possible; but its mission is to widen every day the circle of the guests invited to enjoy in it the legitimate enjoyments of life. I repeat, that this school is eminently French, and I am proud of it for the sake of my country.—*History of Political Economy in Europe, from the Ancients down to our times, &c.* By M. BLANQUI senior, Member of the Institute, and Professor of Industrial Economy at the Conservatory of Arts, &c. 2 vols. Paris. 1845.

The mode in which property is distributed, has, perhaps, the chief influence in every state in determining the character and effects of its constitution. Property carries with it authority and power. Where the lower classes are wholly destitute of it, they are generally dependent and servile; while those who monopolize it are too often arrogant and corrupt. If there exists no rank of citizens possessing a moderate share of it with a secure tenure, there is little probability of finding any class of society exhibiting the purest virtues, the most useful industry, and the most independent spirit. Nor does any circumstance

tend to inflame domestic feuds, or expose to foreign violence, more than extremely unequal distribution or uncertain tenure of property.

The Hebrew government was founded on an equal agrarian law. * * * The accumulation of debt was prevented, first, by prohibiting every Jew from accepting interest from any of his fellow-citizens; next, by establishing a regular release of all debts every seventh year; and finally, by ordaining that no lands could be alienated for ever, but must, on each year of the Jubilee, or seventh sabbatic year, revert to the families which originally possessed them. Thus, without absolutely depriving individuals of all temporary dominion over their landed property, it re-established, every fiftieth year, that original and equal distribution of it which was the foundation of the national policy; and as the period of such reversion was fixed and regular, all parties had due notice of the terms on which they negotiated: there was no ground for public commotion or private complaint.

Not only was the original balance of property preserved, but the closest and dearest connexions of affinity attached to each other the inhabitants of every vicinage. Thus, domestic virtue and affection had a more extensive sphere of action; the happiness of rural life was increased; a general attention to virtue and decorum was promoted, from that natural emulation which every family would feel, to preserve unsullied the reputation of the vicinage, &c.—DR. GRAVES *On the Pentateuch*.

While the security of property is justly considered by most writers among the first objects of society, it must be conceded that its accumulation by particular classes of persons does not require to be encouraged by positive institutions. They may be safely left to the cupidity of individuals. The rewards of wealth are such—the power, influence, distinction and enjoyments it brings to the possessor—are so great that the disposition to accumulate riches does not need to be stimulated by artificial contrivances, by primogeniture and entail laws, that lock up property for indefinite periods from the natural competitions and vicissitudes of social life. At the same time, it would be undermining the very principle of utility on which property is established, to fix any limit to the possessions of individuals; in this matter there can be no such thing as too much or too little; and every one is entitled to the undisturbed possession of as much as he can acquire, without injuring the equal and similar rights of his neighbour.—*History and Political Philosophy of the Middle and Working Classes*. By DR. JOHN WADE. Fourth Edition.

Property is not subdivided in Poland, and it was nearly in the same state in France before the Revolution. Why is France better cultivated now than it was in 1789? I cannot give to this question all the developments that it requires, because it does not properly fall within the scope of my inquiries. But one thing is certain, that the more riches are multiplied and divided, the greater is the real strength they give to a state, the more they attach its citizens to their country and assure its tranquillity—not the silent and compulsory tranquillity of slaves, but, if I may so express myself, the bustling and active tranquillity of freemen.

Will the English Government act judiciously if it do not, without loss of time, encourage the increase of landed proprietors—of those individuals, whose ruin, whatever may take place, can never be complete; and if it do not act in the same manner in regard to manufactures, by augmenting as much as possible the number of masters, in order to lessen that of the mere operatives, even although there should be a falling off in the sale of its merchandize abroad? Economists have not, so far as I know, treated the question of wealth in England under this point of view: they have confined their attention to that of production; and this phenomenon, considered in its various phases, has completely absorbed their inquiries and speculations. Their mistake has lain in separating political economy from political legislation.

It cannot be said that wealth confined to a single class is the means of preventing revolutions. By one of those phenomena natural to the political order of things, what preserves power may also cause its destruction.

A king of Macedonia about to make peace with the barbarians, descended from the north, showed them his treasures, in order to give them a high idea of his power. The barbarians broke off the negotiations; they had no treasures to lose, and they desired to acquire them by war. A nation divided into two classes, the one possessing all, and the other without anything, appears to me to be in the same situation as the king of Macedonia in regard to the barbarians. In such a nation, a single event, a favourable opportunity, and a man of courage, are sufficient to produce a revolution.—*Essays on Elementary Politics*. By A. A. SORREL. 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1844.

To sum up all, the political condition of England is this:—An aristocracy of position in the higher classes; an aristocracy of imitation in the middle ranks; an aristocracy of servility in the inferior orders. The Tories despise democracy, the Whigs fear

it, the Radicals court it, and the people do not understand it. Whence then can come the knowledge which must enlighten the English people? It is not from those who surround them, and who are interested in perpetuating their ignorance, &c. What the English stand in need of are, the moral support and the practical lessons of a country thoroughly democratical, like France.—*Preface to a Translation* (by ELIAS REGNAULT) of *Benham's Political Catechism*. Paris. 1839.

Aristocracy in the nineteenth century is the league, the coalition, of those who wish to consume without producing, live without working, occupy all public places without becoming competent to fill them, and seize upon all honours without meriting them,—that is aristocracy!—GENERAL FOY. *Speech in the Chamber of Deputies*.

The condition of the country, both political and economical, was intolerable. There was nothing but privilege,—privilege vested in individuals, in classes, in towns, in provinces, and even in trades and professions. Everything contributed to check industry, and the natural genius of man. All the dignities of the state, civil, ecclesiastical, and military, were exclusively reserved to certain individuals. No man could take up a profession without certain titles, and the compliance with certain pecuniary conditions. Even the favours of the Crown were converted into family property, so that the King could scarcely exercise his own judgment or give any preference. Almost the only liberty left to the sovereign was that of making pecuniary gifts, and he had been reduced to the necessity of disputing with the Duke of Coigny the abolition of a useless place. Everything then was made immovable property in the hands of a few, and everywhere these few resisted the many who had been despoiled. The burdens of the state weighed on one class only. The noblesse and the clergy possessed about two-thirds of the landed property; the other third, possessed by the people, paid taxes to the King, a long list of feudal *droits* to the noblesse, tithes to the clergy, and had, moreover, to support the devastations committed by noble sportsmen and their game. The taxes upon consumption pressed on the great multitude, and consequently on the people. The collection of these imposts was managed in an unfair and irritating manner. The lords of the soil left long arrears with impunity; but the people, upon any delay in payment, were harshly treated, arrested, and condemned to pay in their persons, in default of money to produce. The people, therefore, nourished with their labour, and defended with their

blood, the higher classes of society, without being able to procure a comfortable subsistence for themselves. The townspeople, a body of citizens industrious, educated, less miserable than the people, could, nevertheless, obtain none of the advantages to which they had a right to aspire, seeing that it was their industry that nourished, and their talents that adorned the kingdom.—*History of the French Revolution.* By M. THIERS. 10 vols. Paris. 1832.

There is nothing new in the history of nations. Aristocracies have brought every civilized country, by turns, to ruin, through their selfish intrigues and ambition. It was my intention to have gone fully and historically into this subject, but the abundance of domestic matter has denied me the necessary space. Turn your eyes, however, in what direction you please, and there lie the examples of aristocratic desolation. Who ruined the intellectual states of Greece? The aristocracy, which assumed their management. Who betrayed the Roman republic, and converted it into a despotism, from which hour the national decline commenced? The aristocracy, with the Cæsars at their head. In vain the first successful traitor fell by the hand of the indignant Brutus; there were plenty of his fellows to succeed him. Rome became imperial, and perished. Turn your eyes, however, nearer to our own times—to Spain. What has reduced that country to the anarchy and misery of the present time? The pride, the luxury, the ambition, and effeminate sloth of the aristocracy.

Turn to Germany. There, the nobles had long undermined the ancient freedom of the empire. Every petty count aspired to be a prince: he severed his little territory from the government of the whole; set up a separate independence—the right of the axe and the gallows—till the country, dissected into two thousand little states, fell a ready prey to Napoleon, who swept away a host of tyrant nobles, and the country is all the better for it.

Look again at Sweden. That country was, and is, in the hands of a swarming nobility. This nobility, at the approach of the Russians, sold the fortresses and strong positions in Finland and Pomerania for money, which thus became lost to the country for ever; and which loss they had then the meanness to make one of the charges against their king, Gustavus IV., for which they deposed him, and adopted Bernadotte. The country is still oppressed by the incubus of this nobility, which usurps all honours, offices, and emoluments; and the nation groans and declines under them. On the contrary, Norway, though subjected to Sweden by the arrangements of the great European

powers, has with a brave spirit resisted all Swedish attempts to bring it into the same aristocratic subjection. It arose in arms, compelled a free representative government, and abolished aristocracy; (the law of equal division exists in Norway, and entails are unknown). The land and government are in the hands of the people, and what are the consequences? Agriculture and trade flourish, and the nation, according to Mr. Laing, presents the most singular contrast to Sweden. In the one country there is an air of neglect and decay—in the other, of comfort and prosperity; in the one, of crime and misery—in the other, of virtue and enjoyment. Mr. Laing pronounces the Norwegians to be, through this their wise and stout decision to govern themselves as they act for themselves in private life, the most happy and flourishing of European nations. (In 1826, it was stated in the *Constitutionnel*, that the present King had by an edict abolished the custom of primogeniture in Sweden.)—*The Aristocracy of England*. By W. HOWITT. 1 vol. 1826.

I found it an admitted truth throughout the United States, that enormous private wealth is inconsistent with the spirit of republicanism. Wealth is power, and large amounts of power ought not to rest in the hands of individuals.

The desire of riches merges in a regard to opinion. There is more of the spirit of competition and of ostentation in it, than desire of accumulation. It has been mentioned that there are not more than four or five hundred opulent men—worth 100,000 dollars and upwards—in all the six states of New England, in a population of about two millions.

The popular feeling is so strong against transmitting large estates, and favouring one child, that nobody attempts to do it. The rare endeavours made by feudal prepossessions to perpetuate this vicious custom have been all happily frustrated.

This remote approach to an equalization of property is, as far as it goes, an improvement upon the state of affairs in the old world, where the accumulation of wealth into masses, the consequent destitution of large portions of society, and the divisions which are thus established between class and class, constitute a system too barbarous to endure. (In the United States the law divides property equally among the heirs, in case of intestate succession; but, as in Britain, a father has an unlimited power of testing, which he has not in France.)—*Society in America*. By MISS H. MARTINEAU. 2 vols. 8vo. 1837.

The laws which are prejudicial to the material interests of man, appear to be less injurious to the manners and to society than

those which affect his moral interests. These laws have in them nothing that is degrading, either to the individual or the community. Still, material interests are the principle and foundation of all others, and some of them are so essential, pure, and sacred, that to violate them is to retain man in a state of poverty, humiliation, and mediocrity, which degrades and brutalizes him, and that strips off the cincture with which the Creator has encircled the brow of the master of the earth. Such are the laws which confer privileges on wealth, the laws of primogeniture and entail, commercial and agricultural monopolies in favour of certain families, classes, and castes; those that impose heavy taxes on the first necessities of life, whether it be on the bread which the operative consumes, the salt with which he seasons his food, or the tools which he uses to gain his livelihood. To enact such laws is to commit a species of moral and social murder, indirectly indeed, but not the less real. Direct or indirect laws of this description, without having the same fatal influence as immoral laws, are deplorable and perilous.—*On the Influence of Manners on the Laws, and that of the Laws on Manners*, (Prize Essay of the Institute) by M. MATTU, 1 vol. 8vo. Paris. 1832.

The soil of England, which in 1815 was in the hands of about 30,000 proprietors, had been in the hands of about eight times that number only forty years before! In other words, the proprietors of England were reduced from 240,000 or 250,000, as they were in 1755, to about 30,000, all in the course of forty years, or little more than a single generation; and there is every reason to believe that the process has been going on with equal rapidity from 1815 to the present day.

The soil of Ireland is parcelled out in large estates and very small farms, so that it combines all the evils of two opposite systems; while a third evil is added—the monster evil of absenteeism.

The soil of Scotland now belongs to little more than 3,000 great proprietors, (Mr. Laing, p. 44.) as many as might conveniently assemble in the west kirk of Edinburgh, or the city-hall of Glasgow! One-third of the whole lands of the country were supposed to be under strict entail in the days of Adam Smith, and more recently all the ancient proprietors of a whole county (with one exception) have been bought out by one noble family; and by another, sixty or seventy small estates have been purchased during the minority of the heir.

This change of property might have nothing alarming in it, but for the laws of primogeniture and entail; for if it was rapidly acquired, it might be as easily dissipated, and large portions of

it might soon be in the market again ; but viewed in connexion with these laws, it does afford a very serious view of the prospects of the country ; for, as the laws stand, the 3,000 proprietors of Scotland have it in their power, if they please, to lay every acre of the soil under a strict entail, and thus to place it wholly *extra commercium*, so that no part of it shall ever come into the market, or be liable for the debts of the possessor ; and the whole mass of society may thus be precluded from the hope or the possibility of acquiring property in their native land. In the words of Lord Kames, " A number of noblemen and gentlemen among us lie in wait for every parcel of land that comes into the market. Intent upon aggrandizing their family, or their estate, which is their favourite object, they secure every purchase by an entail ; and the same course will be followed till no land be left to be purchased. Thus, every entailed estate in Scotland becomes, in fact, a mortmain, admitting additions without end, but absolutely barring alienation ; and if the legislature interpose not, the period is not distant, when all the land in Scotland will be locked up by entails, and withdrawn from commerce."

Add to these *facts*, the declared *opinions* of men who have directed their serious attention to the subject, and whom all will acknowledge competent to pronounce a judicious judgment. Take men of all nations, that there may be no bias of self-interest ; and men of all political parties, that there may be no bias of party feeling ; and you will find that those who have studied the subject most deeply, however they may differ on other points, are all but unanimous on this : and that they unite, as with one voice, in warning the country of the danger to which her social interests, and even her civil liberties, are exposed through the operation of these laws.

Take the opinions of the continental statista, Passy, Beaumont, Sismondi, Guizot, Constant, Dupin, and others, (as they are collected in a useful pamphlet, "The Aristocracy of Britain," published by J. & G. Dyer, London), and you will find them, among minor differences of opinion, unanimous on these two points : *First*—That a great social evil exists in Britain at the present day, which they regard as the sure precursor of a coming convulsion ; and, *secondly*—That this evil, consisting mainly in the unequal distribution of property, is to be traced to the operation of those laws of primogeniture and entail, which prevent the subdivision of the soil, and preserve it from alienation. These continental writers, contemplating the action of a great and complicated system at a distance, and having at least no personal interest in it, might be regarded as calm and dispassionate witnesses, were it not that they may be supposed to have some latent bias arising from their national feelings in favour of

another system, which has been substituted for ours in their own country; but as they appeal to their own *experience* of its practical effects, and regard it as the chief means, under Providence, of averting another revolutionary crisis, their testimony deserves and demands our most serious attention, especially when we find that it is corroborated by the reasonings of our own great writers of every shade of political opinion.

For, take the opinions of Adam Smith, Principal Robertson, and Lord Kames, as representing the great writers of the last century; and take the opinions of Sir Walter Scott, Dr. Arnold, and Mr. Laing as representing the thoughtful minds (with one or two illustrious exceptions) of the present age; and you will find that the profound economist and the philosophical historian, the practised lawyer and the liberal divine, the high Tory novelist and the accomplished *litterateur*, concur with one voice in protesting against the policy and justice of these laws, and predicting their infallible tendency to bring on, slowly but surely, a great social revolution.—*The Emancipation of the Soil, and Free-trade in Land*. By Dr. BUCHANAN, of the Free Church of Scotland. 1845.

But the revolution in our law of succession which we made fifty years ago still remains to be effected in several other countries of Europe. In England, it is the source and permanent cause of that excessive opulence which so unduly augments the political power of the Aristocracy, and of that extensive misery which decimates the poorer classes. All the younger sons, all the daughters, whom a selfish policy cuts off from a share of the family estate, become burdens on the nation. As in the middle ages, the strong bands known under the name of Fleecers, Sorners, Rivers, Bandits, &c. were recruited from the ranks of the younger sons and the bastards of the great barons—so in the present day in England, are the army, the navy, the church, and public offices of all kinds, the booty of the younger sons, of the sons-in-law, and of the bastards of the Aristocracy. Take away this plunder, and the British Aristocracy would find in its own bosom its most formidable enemies. Let us, however, hope that the time is not distant, when the sound ideas of justice and morality, which prevailed amongst us at the end of the last century, will become equally triumphant amongst all the people of Europe.—*Dictionnaire Politique. Article Primogeniture*. By H. CELLIEZ, 1 vol. large 8vo. Paris. 1842.

EFFECTS OF THE ENTAIL LAWS IN SCOTLAND.—(*The Times Commissioner*.)—Fort William, Inverness-shire, Oct. 13, 1846.—

In several of the letters which I have forwarded to you, allusions have been made to the mischievous results of the law of entail in Scotland—to the manner in which that law keeps the landed proprietors poor, and thus disables them from improving their estates, and giving employment to the people. At this moment the great object of both the Government and the proprietors is to find employment for the people, in order that the people, with the "fruits of their industry," may be enabled to purchase a substitute for the potato. But there is little or no employment to be had; at the same time, there are nearly 6,000,000 of acres of land in Scotland lying in a state of nature, capable of improvement, and of giving employment to the people. Thus we have ample, palpable means of most profitable and useful employment, co-existing with the fact that those means are neglected, whilst the people are likely to starve. The first superficial view of such a state of things would lead one to throw all the blame upon the landed proprietors, the owners of those 6,000,000 of waste acres—with whom, apparently, lies the power of directing their cultivation, and the apparently voluntary neglect of which duty of their position keeps the country in a state of nature, and the people without employment. If, however, a little inquiry shows to us that these landed proprietors, for the most part, are merely *nominal* proprietors, having their estates so burdened with debts and charges imposed on them by law, that they themselves are poor and powerless, and in some degree rather objects of pity than indignation—that they are generally utterly unable to lay out a "bawbee" for improvements, and often absolutely without either *directive or permissive* power to encourage the cultivation of wastes only nominally theirs—we must pause before we attach all blame to them. The inquiry then arises, How is it that they are so situated? The system or the law which produces such results is that on which our indignation ought first to rest, accompanied by a determination to remedy the system or to reform the law. If further inquiry and research convince us that the law of entail, as established in Scotland, has insured these consequences over at least *one-half* of Scotland, and that under that law the mischief is every year increasing, then, however much the necessities of the times which gave rise to it, or the pride and selfishness of those who continued and made binding such a law, may be matters of excuse or reprobation, we must look to this law as at the root of the greater part of the evils of the existence of a desolate and unimproved country, and a stationary and starving people, and not hastily cast all the blame upon fast-bound, helpless, poor, and often much-to-be-pitied, proprietors. This law, which we quietly permit to remain on the statute-book, has quite as much, if not more, to do with the misery which exists in the Highlands of

Scotland, as the criminal neglect of their duties of all the proprietors put together, whatever that may amount to, and which I by no means wish to shield. Over *more than half of Scotland* this law compels a vile example to be set, which keeps in countenance the negligent proprietor; it gives an artificial value to land from its scarcity, locking it up from commerce. It therefore raises the rental of land in order to afford a fair interest for the high price paid for its purchase. It prevents men of capital, who would have the means of improving, from purchasing the estates of poor and embarrassed men who cannot improve or give employment to the people; and all for what? To enable some few "Lairds o' Cockpen" to fancy themselves as "great" as they are "proud" of their penniless "lang pedigree." But the days are gone by, when the existing merit of the age can be crushed and kept back by the perpetuated merit of past ages vauntingly worn by unworthy successors.

From the sketch which we subjoin, taken chiefly from the work of M. Isambert, an eminent living French jurist, it will be seen that the laws of entail and primogeniture have been preserved in all their stringency in Britain, while among other nations, whom we generally regard as less civilized than ourselves, they have either been wholly extinguished or greatly modified. It will be perceived that these laws were not indigenous to our country, but were introduced amongst us by the Norman conquest, and into Ireland by that of Henry II. In both cases they originated in subjugation, oppression, and injustice. The Norman invaders, as may be seen from M. Thierry's history, were a colony of Norsemen, or sea-pirates, who established themselves in France, and carried their spoliatory incursions into England. The army, with which they subdued the country, was composed of adventurers, bandits, and the scum of various countries, who assembled under the standards of William, in the hope of plunder; and it is from these worthless marauders that many of our great families boast of being descended! Taking forcible possession of the land in England, as well as of the population, whom they rendered slaves, the invaders, in order to preserve their possessions, instituted, first primogeniture, and afterwards entails. Sprung out of a system of robbery and injustice, these laws have, as might have been expected, ever since preserved their furtive character. An evil tree cannot produce good fruit. They have accordingly robbed younger children of their natural rights, and sanctioned the most cruel injustice in families; they have robbed the inferior classes of the most valuable part of a nation's wealth, placed it under an embargo, and

prevented all but persons of a certain standing from having a fair chance of sharing in it; they have robbed the people of their political rights, by giving to those who are the holders of property—in other words, to the Aristocracy—a monopoly of the government; giving them, on the one hand, a house wholly made up of hereditary members of their own order; and, on the other, an Assembly filled, or nearly so, with their relations, nominees, and dependents. They robbed the people of the benefits of the revolution of 1688, by making the power then invested in the Crown pass, in an insidious manner, into the hands of the Aristocracy. They have robbed the Crown by reducing its power to nothing, making it a bauble, a plaything, in the hands of that caste—a puppet, of which it pulls the string. They have robbed the people of education, of whose national institutions, scanty as they are, they have also a monopoly, without making the best use of it. They have robbed the people of their wealth in the shape of taxes, many of them imposed for wars undertaken to put down liberty in America and France. They have robbed the inferior classes of a fair share of the distinctions and offices of state, which are lavished among the younger branches of the disinherited members of the Aristocracy, or their dependents. They have robbed the nation at large of a due share in the representation—of the right of having a voice in the making of the laws, and have rendered the Act of Reform of 1831 an entire failure; they have left the people no other right than that of complaining. They have robbed the people of its morality, by making rank and fortune the chief standards of excellence, and by introducing habits of luxury and prodigality, bribery, corruption, and intimidation. They have robbed the people of the full benefits of religion, by making its chief teachers an affiliated privileged body, who preach not the universal morality of the Gospel, so favourable to fraternity and equality, but an aristocratic time-serving morality. Finally, they have robbed the state of its unity, strength, and power of cohesion, by breaking down the people into classes, jealous of each other, discontented and disunited; and so exposed it to the chances of internal revolution and foreign aggression. Since the laws of primogeniture and entail, so prolific in evils, came from France in times of ignorance and barbarism, could we do better than again borrow from that country, arrived at the highest point of civilization, her existing law of equal succession? To cling to our feudal laws of succession, which other nations the least civilized have flung aside with contempt, would continue to be a laughing-stock and a by-word amongst the other people of Europe.—*The Sentinel*. Edited by JONATHAN DUNCAN. 1845.

It may be remarked that France is the country where the science of Political Economy took its rise. The maxim of "*Laissez-nous faire*," so often cited of late years among ourselves, is as old as the reign of Louis XIV., and was the answer returned by a body of merchants to Colbert, who inquired what he could do for the promotion of trade. It was unfortunately not acted upon either in France or England. In both countries men were slow in perceiving the truth of the observation repeated by Sir James Graham, that "the principles of free-trade are those of common sense." About the middle of last century the economists, the chief of whom were the minister Turgot and Dr. Quesnay, the physician of Louis XV., made approaches to a sounder policy; and it is well known that Adam Smith, in acknowledgment of the aid which he derived from them, intended to have dedicated his great work to Dr. Quesnay, had the latter survived the publication of it. The bulk of the French writers on the science who have since appeared, such as Ganilh, Say, Garnier, Rossi, Chevalier, Blanqui, Faucher, and Bastial, have all carried out and illustrated the leading doctrines of Adam Smith, and have, above all, been the zealous advocates of free-trade. At the present day they have found enlightened expounders in the contributors to the *Journal des Economistes*, a monthly publication of some years' standing, and in many of the ablest and best circulated of the Parisian and provincial newspapers.

To the English, now justly proud of their victory over the Aristocracy in the matter of the Corn-laws, and who are disposed to look with pity and contumely on the efforts of other nations meditating a change in their restrictive commercial policy, we have to address a word or two, with the view of moderating their feelings of exultation. Although they boast, and with reason, of the truths first demonstrated if not discovered by Adam Smith, we ask them to consider how long it was before these truths were recognised, and in any degree practically carried out, in our own country. They were repudiated by Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan, who publicly declared the doctrine of free-trade to be opposed to common sense, and contrary to the general experience of mankind. Only a year or two before the passing of the Reform Bill, the late Lord Grey, in criticizing the commercial innovations of Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Canning, regretted that the old commercial policy of the country had been partially abandoned, and talked of standing by his order and the Corn-laws! At a later period, a Premier, Lord Melbourne, used still more emphatic language in reference to the Corn-laws; while it took Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel some thirty years of statesmanship, with the rough schooling of the Anti-corn Law League to boot, to arrive at a clear and just con-

ception of one of the leading truths of political science. Even at the present hour, in England, is there not a strongly-organized body entirely opposed to the principles of free-trade?

Finally, let those of our countrymen who plume themselves on the progress of free-trade in England, compared to France, call to mind, that in one very material respect the French are farther advanced than ourselves—namely, in free-trade in land. A half of a century has elapsed since, by abolishing entails and primogeniture, and establishing a law of equal division in successions, they gave a free circulation to the soil, and distributed wealth more equally among all classes than it formerly was in France, or than it still is in England. Till the English shall set about and effect this grand reform, which we conceive to have a far more important bearing on the social, economical, and political state of a nation than the abolition of import duties on corn or anything else, modesty seems to prescribe that they should allow the French to carry out, in their own way and time, those economic commercial changes, which we feel assured they are ultimately certain of accomplishing.—*Douglas Jerrold's Newspaper*. 1847.

THE END.

A LIST OF BOOKS

PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY

ARTHUR HALL AND CO.,

25, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Families, Schools, and Book Societies Supplied.

Illustrated Books for Presents, &c.

ABBEYS AND CASTLES OF ENGLAND, Illustrated in 250 Woodcuts and Steel Plates, with Description by Dr. BEATTIE, imperial 8vo. cloth, 1l. 5s.

BARTLETT.—WALKS IN AND ABOUT THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, AND ITS ENVIRONS. Being a Description of the most interesting places in and near that memorable City. Illustrated by 8 Steel Plates, and 40 Wood Engravings, by W. H. BARTLETT. Second Edition, in demy 8vo. price 10s. 6d. cloth.

— **CALEDONIA ILLUSTRATED**, in a Series of 150 Splendid Engravings by Cousen, Armytage, &c., from Drawings by Bartlett, Allom, &c. with a Description of Scotland, by Dr. BEATTIE, now publishing in 1s. Numbers.

— **A BRIEF SKETCH of the TOPOGRAPHY and ANTIQUITIES of JERUSALEM.** From personal survey, by Mr. BARTLETT, consisting of 3 Large Lithographic Views, several Steel Plates, and numerous Woodcuts, in folio, price 12s. Adapted for the Use of Schools.

BIBLICAL KEEPSAKE: or, Landscape Illustrations of the Most Remarkable Places mentioned in Scripture, containing 32 Engravings by Finden. Edited by Rev. T. H. HORNE, B.D. 8vo. cloth, gilt edges, 1l. 1s.

BLESSINGTON.—THE GEMS OF BEAUTY; Displayed in a Series of 42 highly-finished Steel Engravings of various subjects, from Designs by E. T. Parris, G. Cattermole, R. Herbert, and E. Corbould, Esqrs., Engraved under the superintendence of Mr. CHARLES HATH; with fanciful Illustrations in Verse, by the COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON. In large folio, splendidly bound in cloth and ornamented, price 2l. 2s.

GALLERY of PICTURES by the FIRST MASTERS of the different Schools, with Biographical and Critical Dissertations by ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, containing 97 Engravings, 2 vols. 4to. cloth, gilt edges, price 1l. 11s. 6d.

HALL, MRS. S. C.—THE DRAWING ROOM TABLE BOOK. Edited by Mrs. S. C. HALL. Comprising 24 highly-finished Engravings, from Paintings by Wilkie, Landseer, Warren, Leslie, Daniell, and others; being Illustrations to Original Tales by the Editor, and Poetry by popular living Authors. Beautifully printed in imperial 8vo. each page enriched with Ornamental Devices. Price 16s. elegantly bound and gilt.

LETTERS FROM UNDER A BRIDGE, with Poems, by N. P. WILLIS, Esq. Illustrated with numerous Steel Engravings, small 4to. cloth gilt, 1l.

ROYAL GEMS from the GALLERIES of EUROPE. Engraved after Pictures of the Great Masters, with Notices by S. C. HALL, F.S.A. Folio, cloth, gilt edges, 3l. 3s.

- AFRICAN CRY**, and who is ready to Respond to it? 18mo. cloth, 1s. 6d.
- ALEXANDER'S SWITZERLAND**, and the Swiss Churches, 12mo. cloth, 5s.
- ANIMAL MAGNETISM**, its History to the Present Time, with a brief account of the Life of Mesmer, by a SURGEON. 18mo. cloth, gilt edges, 2s. 6d.
- ARISTOCRACY of BRITAIN**, and the Law of Primogeniture, being a series of Translations from Modern French Writers, in 12mo. 2s. 6d. sewed, 3s. cloth.
- BARNES on the APOSTOLIC CHURCH**, 18mo. cloth, 2s.
- BARTON.—HOUSEHOLD VERSES.** By BERNARD BARTON. Embellished with a Vignette Title and Frontispiece, engraved by Bentley, from drawings by Churchyard. Price 6s. fcp. octavo, neatly bound in cloth extra.
- BASKET of FLOWERS**, by Dr. BEDELL, 32mo. cloth, gilt edges, 1s. 6d.
- BAXTER.—THE PRACTICAL WORKS of RICHARD BAXTER.** Reprinted without abridgment from the Original collected Edition. With an Introductory Essay on the Genius and Writings of Baxter, by ROBERT PHILIP. And a fine Portrait of Baxter. In 4 vols. imperial octavo, price 3l. 3s. cloth.
- BECKFORD.—THOUGHTS on HUNTING**, in a series of Familiar Letters to a Friend, by PETER BECKFORD, Esq. A New Edition, with a Chapter on Coursing, 12mo. cloth, 6s.
- BEDDOME'S SCRIPTURE EXPOSITOR.** 18mo. cloth, 1s.
- BENDEL.—MEMOIRS of the LIFE and WRITINGS of J. A. BENDEL of Wurtemberg**, by Dr. BURK, Translated by WALKER. 8vo. cloth, 10s. 6d.

Biblical Commentaries.

- ALBERT BARNES' COMMENTS on the NEW TESTAMENT.** A New Edition, edited by Dr. CUMMING. In 9 vols. cloth, each 2s. 6d.
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gospels, 2 vols. | Ephesians, 1 vol. |
| Acts, 1 vol. | Thessalonians, 1 vol. |
| Romans, 1 vol. | Hebrews, 1 vol. |
| Corinthians and Galatians, 2 vols. | |
- BOOTHROYD'S FAMILY BIBLE**, with Notes and Introductions, &c., 3 vols. 4to. 5l. 5s.
- CALMET'S DICTIONARY of the BIBLE**, with his Fragments, by TAYLOR. Illustrated, 5 vols. 4to. 6l. 6s.
- CAUNTER.—THE HOLY BIBLE**, with Notes, by the Rev. J. H. CAUNTER, B.D. Illustrated by 144 engravings, 8vo. 10s. 6d. cloth, 15s. morocco.
- CLARKE.—THE HOLY BIBLE**, with Commentary and Notes by Dr. ADAM CLARKE. New Edition, in 6 vols. 6l. 8s. cloth.
- COBBIN'S CONDENSED COMMENTARY and FAMILY EXPOSITION of the HOLY BIBLE**; containing the Authorized Versions of the Old and New Testaments; with the most valuable Criticisms of the best Biblical Writers; Practical Reflections and Marginal References, Chronology, Indices, &c. Imperial 8vo. 1l. 10s. cloth.
- COGHLAN.—SCRIPTURAL COMMENTARY on GENESIS and MATTHEW**, by the Rev. Dr. COGHLAN, 2 vols. 8vo. 1l. 4s. boards.
- HENRY.—THE HOLY BIBLE**, with EXPOSITION, by MATTHEW HENRY, Edited by BICKERSTETH, in 6 vols. 4to. cloth, 4l. 14s. 6d.
- Abridged by the Rev. E. BLONFIELD, 2 vols. 4to. with Illustrations, 2l. 15s. cloth.

SCOTT'S (REV. THOMAS) COMMENTARY on the BIBLE, UNABRIDGED, with Notes and References, by Dr. SYMINGTON, and illustrated with Maps and Plates, in 3 vols. royal quarto, 4l. 4s. cloth, lettered.

BIRRELL.—MEMOIR of EBENEZER BIRRELL, late of Stepney College, by the Rev. C. M. BIRRELL of Liverpool. Second Edition, 18mo. cloth, 1s. 6d.

BIRT'S PERSONAL RELIGION VINDICATED. Third Edition, cloth, 9d.

BOGATZKY'S MORNING and EVENING TREASURY, New Edition, with Memoir, in 1 vol. 32mo. 2s. cloth.

BONAR'S NIGHT OF WEEPING. Fifteenth Thousand, 18mo. 2s. cloth.

BOOKKEEPING (The MANUAL of,) comprising a Complete Set of Books; by an Experienced Clerk. Fifth Edition, greatly enlarged, 12mo. 4s. cloth.

BUNYAN.—THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, with Memoir by ST. JOHN. Illustrated, New Edition, 12mo. 6s. cloth, gilt edges.

— **THE PICTORIAL EDITION OF THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS,** with Life by PHILIP, and Notes by MASON. Illustrated with numerous superior Engravings on Wood, in the new style, by the Messrs. WHIMPER, and 10 fine Steel Plates. In super-royal octavo, appropriately done up in cloth extra, price 18s.

— **THE PICTORIAL EDITION OF THE HOLY WAR.** Numerous very superior Cuts. Uniform with the above, cloth extra, price 12s.

BURDER.—VILLAGE SERMONS; or, Fifty-two Plain and Short Discourses on the principal Doctrines of the Gospel; intended for the Use of Families, Sunday-schools, and Companies assembled for Religious Instruction in Country Villages, by the Rev. GEORGE BURDER. A New Edition, with a Life of the Author, by the Rev. INGRAM COBBIN. 12mo. cloth, lettered, 3s.

BURNS.—THE PEOPLE'S EDITION OF THE WORKS OF BURNS. Embellished by 33 fine Plates, (after Wright and other Artists,) illustrative of the principal subjects of his Poems. With a New Life of Burns, and Explanatory Notes preceding each Poem, by ALLAN CUNNINGHAM. In one handsome volume, super-royal octavo, cloth extra, price 18s.

This will be found the most complete and best edition of the Works of Burns yet offered to the public, and the only one edited by and published under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Cunningham.

BURTON'S ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY. A New Edition, in 1 vol. 8vo. 12s. boards.

CAMPBELL.—THE NEW TESTAMENT, Translated by DRS. CAMPBELL, MACKNIGHT, and DODDRIDGE. New Edition, by WM. JONES, M.A. 24mo. 3s. 6d. cloth, gilt.

CLARKSON.—A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH of the late THOMAS CLARKSON, by TAYLOR and STREBBING. New Edition, 12mo. cloth, 3s.

CHANNING.—People's Edition of the Entire Works of W. E. CHANNING, D.D. complete in 2 vols. 8vo. 12s. boards.

CHILLINGWORTH'S THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS a Safe Way to Salvation; with his Ten Tracts against Popery. A New Edition, by Dr. PATRICK, 12mo. 7s. cloth.

CHEMISTRY NO MYSTERY, a Lecturer's Bequest, by JOHN SCOFFERN, Esq. illustrated, 12mo. 6s. cloth.

COLLIER.—PEARLS OF GREAT PRICE; or, Maxims, &c. Selected from the Works of Rev. JEREMY COLLIER, M.A. 12mo. cloth, 2s. 6d.

COOKERY.—THE HOUSEKEEPER'S GUIDE; or, a Plain and Practical System of Domestic Cookery, by MRS. COPLEV. New Edition, 12mo. 4s. 6d. cloth.

COWPER'S LIFE and WORKS, edited by the Rev. T. S. GRIMSHAW. Plates, 8 vols. fcp. 8vo. 2l. cloth.

———— **POEMS**, with Essay by JAMES MONTGOMERY. New Edition, 12mo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

COX, DR. F. A.—HISTORY of the BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY, from 1792 to 1842, to which is added a Sketch of the General Baptist Mission, 2 vols. 12mo. 7s. 6d. cloth.

———— **The BAPTISTS in AMERICA**; a Narrative of the Deputation from the Baptist Union in England to the United States and Canada, by Drs. Cox and Hoby. 12mo. cloth, 8s.

CRUDEN'S COMPLETE CONCORDANCE to the OLD and NEW TESTAMENTS, with the Compendium of the Bible. To which is added, a Sketch of the Life of the Author. By WILLIAM YOUNGMAN. In 1 vol. imperial 8vo. cloth, 15s.

CULPEPER'S HERBAL IMPROVED, a New Family Herbal of all the British and Foreign Plants, Herbs, Roots, &c. known to be useful to Man. A New Edition, with 100 Engravings, 18mo. cloth, 6s. coloured, 3s. 6d. plain.

D'AUBIGNE.—The HISTORY of the PROTESTANT REFORMATION of the 16th Century, by Dr. MERLE D'AUBIGNE. New Edition, 4 vols. in 1, 8vo. 6s. cloth.

Devotional Works.

BICKERSTETH, Rev. E.—FAMILY PRAYERS. New Edition, 12mo. 5s. cloth.

———— **BOOK OF PRIVATE DEVOTIONS.** Second Edition. 12mo. cloth, 5s.

CUMMING, DR. JOHN. — "OUR FATHER," a Week's Family Prayers, 18mo. 1s. 6d. limp cloth, gilt edges.

FLETCHER, DR. A.—GUIDE TO FAMILY DEVOTION; containing 730 Hymns, 730 Prayers, and 730 Passages of Scripture, with appropriate Reflections. The whole is so arranged as to form the most complete and distinct Family Service for every Morning and Evening in the year ever published. It is embellished with 16 fine Engravings on Steel, after the Old Masters, and a Frontispiece. The Thirtieth Edition of 1000 each. Newly Revised and Corrected by the Author. In 1 vol. 4to, neatly bound in cloth, gilt, price 1l. 6s.

JENKS' FAMILY DEVOTIONS; with Prayers for Particular Persons on most occasions. New Edition, by the Rev. CHARLES SIMEON. 12mo. large type, cloth, lettered, 3s.

LEE.—A HAND-BOOK of DEVOTION. By ROBERT LEE, D.D., Edinburgh. 8vo. cloth, gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

MORE.—PIETAS PRIVATA; or, Short Prayers for Private Use, selected from the Writings of MRS. HANNAH MORE. New Edition, 32mo, 1s. 6d. cloth, gilt edges.

THORNTON'S (HENRY, Esq. M.P.) FAMILY PRAYERS. Seventeenth Edition. 12mo. 3s. cloth.

WATTS. — **A GUIDE TO PRAYER**; or, the Gift, Grace, and Spirit of Prayer, with Plain Directions for Every Person, by Rev. ISAAC WATTS, D.D. New Edition, 12mo. 2s. 6d. cloth.

- DICK'S (DR.) CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER; or, the Connexion of Science and Philosophy with Religion. New Edition, 12mo. 5s. cloth, gilt edges.
- PHILOSOPHY of RELIGION; or, an Illustration of the Moral Laws of the Universe. New Edition, 12mo. 2s. cloth.
- CELESTIAL SCENERY; or, the Wonders of the Planetary System Displayed. Fifth Thousand. 12mo. 10s. 6d. cloth.
- SIDERIAL HEAVENS, and other subjects connected with Astronomy. Third Thousand. 12mo. 10s. 6d. cloth.
- EDWARDS.—APPEAL from the CHURCH to the HOPEFUL but NON-PROFESSING HEARER, with Suitable Reflections for Professing Christians, by the Rev HENRY EDWARDS, Ph.D., D.D. 18mo. 2s. cloth.
- ELLIS' (MRS) WOMEN of ENGLAND, their Social Duties and Domestic Habits. Twentieth Edition. Fcp. 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- DAUGHTERS of ENGLAND, their Position in Society, Character, and Responsibilities. Fcp. 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- WIVES of ENGLAND, their Relative Duties, Domestic Influence, and Social Obligations. Fcp. 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- MOTHERS of ENGLAND, their Influence and Responsibility. Fcp. 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- EMERSON.—NATURE, an Essay, LECTURES, ORATIONS, &c. by R. W. EMERSON. New Edition, 12mo. 1s. 6d. cloth.
- EVANS' SKETCH of ALL RELIGIONS. Eighteenth Edition. With Additions by Rev. J. H. BRANSBY. 12mo. 5s. cloth.
- FAITH IN CHRIST, of which the Genuine Fruit is Righteousness and Morality. 12mo. 1s. 6d. cloth.
- FAWCETT.—AN ESSAY on ANGER, by JOHN FAWCETT, D.D. Sixth Edition, with Memoir. 18mo. cloth, 1s.
- FOSTER'S ESSAYS, in a Series of Letters. Eighteenth Edition. Fcp. 5s. cloth.
- FOX.—THE PICTORIAL EDITION of FOX'S BOOK of MARTYRS. The Acts and Monuments of the Church. Carefully revised, edited, and corrected from the original black letter edition, published in 1563, with an Introductory Essay, by the Rev. JOHN CUMMING, A.M. Illustrated by 400 Wood Engravings, and 37 Steel Plates, comprising a Series of Portraits of the most important Characters connected with the Reformation. Three very large volumes, super-royal octavo, cloth extra, 3l. 13s. 6d. occupying nearly 3500 pages of text.
- FULLER.—THE COMPLETE WORKS of the Rev. ANDREW FULLER, A.M. New Edition, by His Son. 1 vol. imp. 8vo. 1l. 4s. cloth.
- The BACKSLIDER, with Preface by J. A. JAMES. Cloth, 9d.
- MEMOIR OF, by Dr. RYLAND. 8vo. boards, 7s.
- GIBBS' DEFENCE of the BAPTISTS. Second Edition. 8vo. 9s. boards.
- GRANT'S PICTURES of POPULAR PEOPLE. 24 engravings. Large 8vo. 6s. 6d. cloth.
- GRAY'S POETICAL WORKS and LETTERS. 24mo. 5s. boards.
- GREEN'S BIBLICAL and THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY. Third Edition. 12mo. cloth, 3s. 6d.
- HALL'S (REV. ROBERT) WORKS, with Memoir by GREGORY, and Essay by FOSTER. New Edition. 6 vols. 8vo. cloth. *Library Edition.* 1l. 15s.
- In 6 vols. fcp. cloth, 1l. 1s.

- HALLEY, DR.** on the SACRAMENTS,—“BAPTISM.” 8vo. 14s. cloth.
- HAMILTON'S LIFE IN EARNEST.** Twenty-fifth Thousand. 18mo. 1s. 6d. cloth.
- **MOUNT OF OLIVES.** Thirtieth Thousand. 18mo. 1s. 6d. cloth.
- **TRACTS** in a Volume. 18mo. 2s. cloth.
- HARRIS'S** (Rev. J. D.D.) **GREAT COMMISSION**; or, the Christian Church constituted and charged to convey the Gospel to the World. Fourth Thousand. Royal 12mo. cloth, 10s. 6d.
- **GREAT TEACHER**; or, Characteristics of our Lord's Ministry. Tenth Thousand. Royal 12mo. cloth, 7s. 6d.
- HAWKER'S MORNING and EVENING PORTIONS**; being a Selection of a Verse of Scripture, with Short Observations, for every Day in the Year. By **ROBERT HAWKER**, D.D. Vicar of Charles, Plymouth. In one thick volume, royal 18mo. large type, cloth, only 4s.
- HEIDELBERG**, and the **WAY THITHER.** Fcp. 8vo. 5s. crimson cloth lettered.
- HENRY.**—The **PLEASANTNESS** of a **RELIGIOUS LIFE**, by the late Rev. **MATTHEW HENRY.** A New Edition. 18mo. boards, 1s. 6d.
- HERBERT, GEORGE.**—**POEMS.** A New Edition. 24mo. 2s. 6d. cloth.
- HUSS.**—A **MEMOIR** of the Hungarian Reformer, **JOHN HUSS**, Translated by Miss **WYATT.** 12mo. cloth, reduced to 2s. 6d.
- INNES.**—**RESPONSIBILITY**; or, Improve Your Privileges. By **WILLIAM INNES** of Edinburgh. 32mo. cloth, 1s.
- KNIBB.**—A **PORTRAIT** of the late **WILLIAM KNIBB.** Engraved by **ZOBEL**, in Mezzotinto, after the original by **ROOM**, in possession of the Baptist Missionary Society. Print impressions, 2s. 6d. Proof impressions, 10s. 6d.
- JOHNSON.**—**WALKER and JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY** of the **ENGLISH LANGUAGE.** With the Pronunciation greatly simplified, and on an entirely new plan; with the addition of several Thousand Words. By **R. S. JAMESON, Esq.** Fourth Edition, 8vo. 6s. 6d. cloth, published at 12s.

Johnson, Dr. Edward, works by.

- HYDROPATHY**; its Theory, &c. Third Thousand. Post 8vo. 4s. cloth.
- Its Results. Post 8vo. 4s. cloth.
- LIFE, HEALTH, and DISEASE.** Ninth Thousand. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth.
- JOSEPHUS.**—A new **PICTORIAL** Edition of the Works of **FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS**, the learned and authentic Jewish Historian, and celebrated Warrior. Translated by **WILLIAM WHISTON, A.M.** With an Introductory Essay by the Rev. **H. STERBING, D.D.** Profusely illustrated, royal 8vo. 1l. 5s. cloth.
- JOYCE'S SCIENTIFIC DIALOGUES.** A new edition, illustrated, 12mo. cloth, 5s.
- KAMES' ELEMENTS** of **CRITICISM.** 8vo. boards, 7s.
- on **MAN.** 8vo. boards, 5s. published at 1l. 1s.
- KEITH'S** (Rev. Dr.) **EVIDENCE** of the **TRUTH** of the **CHRISTIAN RELIGION**, derived from the literal Fulfilment of Prophecy; particularly as illustrated by the History of the Jews, and by the discoveries of recent Travellers. Twenty-ninth edition. 12mo. 7s. 6d.
- KITTO'S BIBLE CYCLOPEDIA.** A Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature. By **JOHN KITTO**, Editor of the “Pictorial Bible,” &c. assisted by various able Scholars and Divines. Complete in two large vols. 8vo. 3l. cloth.

Knitting.

The Book of Knitted Lace. Sewed, 6d.

The LADIES' CABINET:—

Part 1. Insertion Lace, Zephyr Wool, &c. 6d.

Part 2. French Designs for Cuffs, &c. 6d.

The Ladies' Repository of Receipts in Knitting, Netting, and Crochet, by Mad. CHARDIN. 6d.

STEADMAN'S CROCHET COLLAR and CAP RECEIPT BOOK. 6d.

KORAN.—Sale's Translation. Edited by Dr. TAYLOR. 2 vols. 8vo. 1l. 4s. boards.

LADY'S CLOSET LIBRARY. By ROBERT PHILIP, author of "The Life and Times of Whitefield," &c.

I.—THE MARVS; or, the Beauties of Female Holiness. Seventh Thousand.

II.—THE MARTHAS; or, the Varieties of Female Piety. Fifth Thousand.

III.—THE LYDIAS; or, the Development of Female Character. Fourth Thousand.

IV.—THE HANNAHS; or, Maternal Influence on Sons. With a Portrait.

Dedicated to Her Majesty, the Queen Dowager. Price 3s. 6d. cloth gilt, each volume.

LARGE and SMALL FARMS, and their Influence on the Social Economy; including a View of the Progress of the Division of the Soil in France since 1815. Translated from the French of H. PASSY, Peer of France, Member of the Institute, ex-Minister of Commerce, of Finance, &c. &c. With Notes. 12mo. cloth, 2s.

LEECHMAN'S LOGIC. Designed as an Introduction to the Study of Reasoning. 12mo. 4s. 6d. cloth.

LOCKE.—THE PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS of JOHN LOCKE. With a Preliminary Discourse and Notes, by J. A. ST. JOHN, Esq., containing the Conduct of the Understanding—Essay on the Human Understanding—an Examination of P. Malebranche's opinion of seeing all things in God, with Remarks upon some of Mr. Norris's Books—Elements of Natural Philosophy—some Thoughts concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman, &c. One vol. royal 8vo. cloth lettered, price 14s.

LOUDON'S (MRS.) LADIES' COMPANION 'to the FLOWER-GARDEN. Being an Alphabetical Arrangement of all the Ornamental Plants usually grown in Gardens and Shrubberies; with full Directions for their Culture. Third Edition, with considerable additions and corrections. Fcap. 6s. 6d. cloth.

— GARDENING FOR LADIES: with a Calendar of Operations and Directions for every Month in the Year. Fifth Edition, with illustrative Woodcuts. Foolscap, 6s. cloth.

— BOTANY for LADIES; or, a Popular Introduction to the Natural System of Plants, according to the classification of De Candolle. Foolscap, 8s. cloth.

MIALL'S NONCONFORMISTS' SKETCH-BOOK. 12mo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

— VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE. 12mo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

MIALL.—A PORTRAIT of EDWARD MIALL, Esq., Editor of the Nonconformist. Drawn from Life, and on Stone. By BELL SMITH. Prints, 5s.; Selected Proofs, 7s. 6d.

MITFORD'S HISTORY of GREECE. By LORD REDESDALE. In 10 vols. 12mo. 2l. 10s. boards.

— BEST EDITION, for the LIBRARY, &c. 8 vols. 8vo. 2l. 12s. 6d. cloth.

MORE, MRS. HANNAH.—MISCELLANEOUS WORKS. Containing all her Popular Writings. 2 vols. 8vo. 12s. cloth.

MORNINGS AT BOW STREET. Plates by CRUIKSHANK. Fourth Edition. 12mo. 5s. cloth.

NARRATIVE of a MISSION of INQUIRY to the JEWS from the CHURCH of SCOTLAND in 1839. Twelfth Thousand. 12mo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

NEELE'S LECTURES on ENGLISH POETRY, &c. 12mo. pp. 500. 5s. cloth.

NEWTON.—THE WORKS of the REV. JOHN NEWTON, late Rector of the United Parishes of St. Mary Woolnoth, and St. Mary Woolchurch-Haw, London. With a Portrait. Also a Life of the Author, by the Rev. RICHARD CECIL; and an Introduction, by the Rev. FRANCIS CUNNINGHAM, Vicar of Lowestoft. In one large volume, super-royal octavo, cloth lettered, price 18s.

PALMER'S SOVEREIGN GOODNESS the Source of Beneficial Distinctions. 12mo. cloth, 3s. 6d.

POETRY (CHIEFLY SACRED) of the REIGN of KING JAMES I. Edited by FARR. 12mo. 5s. 6d. cloth.

POLLOK'S COURSE OF TIME. A Poem, in Ten Books. Seventeenth Edition. Foolscep, 7s. 6d. cloth; 12s. morocco.

READY RECKONER. 32mo. sheep, 1s.

ROCK of ISRAEL: or, a [Word to the Distrustful upon Jehovah, as the Reasonable Object of the Confidence of Man. Royal 32mo. 1s. 6d. cloth.

ROLLIN'S ANCIENT HISTORY—of the Medes, Persians, Egyptians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Macedonians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, Alexander the Great, and his successors. Illustrated by many fine Plates, and a series of Maps especially compiled for the Work. The whole has been corrected, revised, and many valuable notes added, by a Clergyman of the Established Church. Complete in two volumes, octavo, in a neat cloth binding, price One Guinea.

ROMAINE.—THE LIFE, WALK, and TRIUMPH of FAITH: in Three Treatises. By Rev. W. ROMAINE, A.M. A New Edition, with Life of the Author. 3 vols. complete in one. 18mo. 3s. cloth.

RUSSELL, REV. DR., of DUNDEE, on the COVENANTS. 12mo. 6s. 6d. cloth.

ON INFANT SALVATION. 12mo.

3s. 6d. cloth.

SACRED POETRY. Fifteenth Edition. 2 vols. 32mo. each 3s. half-bound.

SELDEN'S TABLE TALK. New Edition. 32mo. 2s. cloth.

SHAKESPEARE ILLUSTRATED. A New Edition, with Notes, Biography, &c., and a series of Steel Plates. 1 vol. royal 8vo. 25s. cloth.

TAYLOR, ISAAC.—FANATICISM. New Edition. 12mo. 6s. cloth.

SATURDAY EVENING. Sixth Thousand. 12mo. 5s. cloth.

TEETOTALER'S COMPANION; or, a Plea for Temperance, By PETER BURNK. Large 8vo. 8s. cloth.

. "A complete Encyclopædia of information and argument on this subject."

THOMSON.—CONSOLATION for CHRISTIAN MOURNERS. Discourses occasioned by the death of Friends, and other Afflictive Dispensations. By ADAM THOMSON, D.D., of Coldstream. 12mo. 5s. cloth.

— OUTLINES for the PULPIT; or, Short Illustrations of Select Texts for Evangelical Discourses. 12mo. 5s. cloth.

— VIEW of the ENGLISH and SCOTTISH DISSENTERS; with a Letter on Patronage. Second Edition. 12mo. 5s. boards.

- TODD'S SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.** Designed as an Aid in Perfecting the Sunday School System. Edited by ALTHANS. 18mo. 2s. cloth.
- VOYAGES ROUND THE WORLD,** from the death of CAPTAIN COOK to the Present Time. 12mo. 5s. cloth.
- WARDLAW (DR.) ON THE ATONEMENT.** 12mo. 5s. cloth.
- **INFANT BAPTISM.** 12mo. 5s. 6d. cloth.
- **LIFE of JOSEPH and JACOB.** 12mo. 6s. cloth.
- WILLIS'S PENCILINGS by the WAY.** 7 New Editions. 12mo. 6s. cloth.
- WINKS' BRITISH READING BOOK.** 18mo. 1s. sheep.
- **SACRED SPEAKER.** 18mo. 1s. 2d. sheep.
- WINSLOW, REV. OCTAVIUS.—THE GLORY of the REDEEMER in his PERSON and WORK.** Third Edition. 8vo. 7s. cloth.
- **PERSONAL DECLENSION and REVIVAL of RELIGION in the SOUL.** Third Edition. Foolscape 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- **THE INQUIRER DIRECTED to an EXPERIMENTAL and PRACTICAL VIEW of the ATONEMENT.** Fifth Edition. Foolscape 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth.
- **THE INQUIRER DIRECTED to an EXPERIMENTAL and PRACTICAL VIEW of the WORK of the HOLY SPIRIT.** Fourth Edition. Foolscape 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- **GLIMPSES of the TRUTH as it is in JESUS.** Foolscape 8vo. 5s. cloth.
- WOMAN'S MISSION.** 7 Eleventh Edition. Foolscape, 3s. 6d. cloth.
- EUPHONIA:** Select Portions of Scripture, Marked for Chanting: with an Essay on the Art. With Twenty of the most approved Chants, Arranged for the Voice or Piano-forte. 1s.
- THE PEOPLE'S MUSIC BOOK,** in 3 vols. and very handsome cloth-bindings. By JAMES TURLER, Esq., Organist of Westminster Abbey; and EDWARD TAYLOR, Esq., Gresham Professor of Music.
- I.—Psalm Tunes 8s. 0d.
 II.—Sacred Music, Chants, &c 12s. 0d.
 III.—Songs, Duets, Trios, Glees, Madrigals, &c. 12s. 0d.
- A Work intended to meet the growing demand for Music among all classes of the community.—Principally arranged for Four Voices, and an Accompaniment for the Organ or Pianoforte; forming, respectively, a complete body of the best Music for the Cathedral, the Church or Chapel, the Family, the Glee Club, and the Madrigal Society.
- *.* A considerable allowance will be made to Congregations adopting the PSALM TUNES, and taking a number of copies, and Choirs, Choral and Madrigal Societies, &c., with the sacred and secular music.
- A SELECTION OF PSALM AND HYMN TUNES,** by JOHN RIPPON, D.D., oblong, half-bound. 8s.
- THE PSALMIST,** a Collection of 400 Psalm and Hymn Tunes, Arranged for Four Voices, with Accompaniment for the Organ or Piano-forte. Edited by VINCENT NOVELLO, in Four Parts at 4s.; or Complete, half-bound, 18s.
- VOCAL SCORE of the above.** Cloth, 6s.
- Ditto Separate Parts, viz. Treble, Alto, Tenor, Bass, each, cloth, 2s. 6d., roan, gilt edges, 3s.

Bibles and Testaments,

INCLUDING THOSE ISSUED BY THE

FREE BIBLE PRESS COMPANY, COLDSTREAM.

POCKET BIBLES.

1.

PEARL, 24mo. COMMON.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Sheep, sprinkled.....	0	10½	Morocco, gilt edges.....	2	6
Roan, embossed, gilt edges.	1	0	Ditto, elegant.....	3	0
Ditto, illuminated.....	1	6			

* * An Atlas of Scripture Geography, consisting of five coloured Maps, prefixed to any of the above at 6d. each copy extra.

2.

PEARL, 24mo. FINE.

Printed in double columns, with approved REFERENCES down the centre.

Roan, embossed, gilt edges.....	3	6	Morocco, gilt edges.....	5	0
---------------------------------	---	---	--------------------------	---	---

Or with eight coloured Maps at 8d. extra.

3.

RUBY, 24mo.

Sheep, sprinkled.....	1	7	Morocco, gilt edges.....	3	2
Roan, embossed, gilt edges.....	1	10	Ditto elegant.....	3	8

SCHOOL AND FAMILY BIBLES.

4.

NONPAREIL, 12mo.

Sheep, sprinkled.....	1	4	Roan, embossed, gilt edges ...	1	10
Ditto, coloured.....	1	7			

5.

NONPAREIL, 12mo.

With various Readings by the Translators.

Sheep, sprinkled... ..	1	8	Roan, embossed, gilt edges ...	2	4
Ditto, coloured.....	2	0			

* * The Translators seem to have assumed, that the "diversity of senses in the margin, where," as they express it, there is great probability for each," should be always printed with the text and all learned readers know, that the best translation is often given in the margin.

6.

SMALL PICA, 8vo.

Sheep, sprinkled	5	0	Roan, embossed, gilt edges ...	7	6
Ditto, coloured	5	4	Morocco, gilt edges	9	0
Calf, coloured, marbled edges ...	7	0			

7.

SMALL PICA, 8vo. ROYAL.

With approved References.

Calf, sprinkled edges	10	6	Morocco, gilt edges.....	14	0
Ditto, coloured.....	11	6			

8.

PICA, 4to. ROYAL.

With all Brown's References and Notes.

Calf, plain	0	16	0	Ditto, tooled	1	3	0
Ditto, coloured.....	0	17	6	Ditto, elegant	1	5	0
Morocco, plain, gilt edges	1	1	0				

TESTAMENTS.

9.

DIAMOND, 48mo. LONG LINES.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Roan, embossed, marbled edges	0	5	Morocco, elegant	1	6
Ditto gilt edges	0	6			

10.

PEARL, 32mo. COLUMNS.

Roan, embossed, marbled edges	0	5	Morocco, elegant	1	6
Ditto gilt edges	0	6			

11.

MINION, 18mo.

Sheep, sprinkled edges	0	8	Sheep, coloured	0	9
------------------------	---	---	-----------------	---	---

12.

BREVIER, 12mo. FOR SCHOOLS.

Sheep, sprinkled edges	0	8	Sheep, coloured	0	9
------------------------	---	---	-----------------	---	---

13

SMALL PICA, 8vo. DEMY.

Coloured sheep, sprinkled edges				2	6
---------------------------------	--	--	--	---	---

BIBLES WITH COMMENTARIES, &c.

14.

ILLUSTRATED POCKET BIBLE.—SCOTT'S COMMENTARY.

The Holy Bible—Authorized Version, with approved References, and an Abridged Commentary. By the Rev. THOMAS SCOTT. With eight coloured Maps.

Roan, embossed, gilt edges	7	6	Morocco, elegant	10	0
Illustrated with twenty-eight beautiful Engravings.					
Roan, embossed, gilt edges	8	6	Morocco elegant	10	6
Morocco, plain	10	0			
Bound with Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns.					
Morocco, gilt edges				14	0

. This beautiful book may be had superbly bound in richest silk velvet, with gilt clasp and rims, and in a morocco case, £2 2s.

15.

THE PORTABLE COMMENTARY,

Being the Holy Bible, with Critical and Illustrative Notes, selected from Biblical Writers, and Marginal References: with the History connecting the Old and New Testaments. By the Rev. INGRAM COBBIN, M.A. Illustrated with coloured Maps.

Roan, embossed, gilt edges	8	6	Morocco	10	6
----------------------------	---	---	---------	----	---

16.

BIBLE WITH CONCORDANCE.

Illustrated Family Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments; with the Self-interpreting and Explanatory Notes, and References, of the late Rev. JOHN BROWN, to which is added, a Complete Concordance from HANWAY. In one volume, small folio, morocco, gilt edges, £1 5s.

PAYNE'S STUDIES IN ENGLISH POETRY. With short Biographical Sketches and Notes, explanatory and critical; intended as a text-book for the higher classes in Schools, and as an Introduction to the Study of English Literature. 12mo. price 6s. bound in embossed roan.

PERRIN'S FRENCH FABLES. Twenty-sixth Edition. By GROS. 12mo. 2s. 6d. bound.

REDE.—THE MODERN SPEAKER. Containing Selections from the Works of our most approved Authors. By LEMAN REDE, Professor of Elocution. 3s. 6d. bound.

SIMSON'S EUCLID. New Edition. By MAYNARD. 18mo. 5s. bound.

STEILL'S PICTORIAL SPELLING BOOK ; a Series of Easy and Progressive Lessons on Facts and Objects. Fifth Edition. With 130 graphic Illustrations, price 1s. 6d. cloth.

WALKINGAME'S TUTOR'S ASSISTANT. By FRASER. Seventy-ninth Edition. 12mo. 2s. bound.

———— KEY to the Above. 12mo. 3s. bound.

WANOSTROCHT'S FRENCH GRAMMAR, with EXERCISES. Twentieth Edition. Revised by TARVER. 12mo. 4s. bound.

Revised by W. Hughes.

HALL'S POCKET COUNTY MAPS, Beautifully Coloured. Containing all the existing Railways, with every Station correctly marked. Embellished with Numerous Vignettes, and appropriate Views of Gentlemen's Seats, Castles, and Public Buildings. Also the Arms of each County, City, and Borough. The Boundaries as defined by the Reform Bill; Canals, Railroads, and the latest Improvements, from the Ordnance Surveys. Price 8d. each, mounted, and in a Case.

Bedfordshire
Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Cambridgeshire
Cheshire
Cornwall
Cumberland
Derbyshire
Devonshire
Dorsetshire
Durham
Environs of London
Essex
Gloucestershire
Hampshire
Herefordshire
Hertfordshire
Huntingdonshire
Isle of man
Isle of Thanet
Isle of Wight
Kent
Lancashire

Leicestershire
Lincolnshire
Middlesex
Monmouthshire
Norfolk
Northamptonshire
Northumberland
Nottinghamshire
Oxfordshire
Rutlandshire
Shropshire
Somersetshire
Staffordshire
Suffolk
Surrey
Sussex
Warwickshire
Westmoreland
Wiltshire
Worcestershire
Yorkshire, East Riding
Yorkshire, North Riding
Yorkshire, West Riding

ENGLAND AND WALES—SCOTLAND—IRELAND,

double the size of the above, price 1s. 4d. each.

The Sacred Classics:

A select Library of Theological Works; being a choice selection of Sacred Poetry and Sermon Literature of the Seventeenth Century. Edited by the Rev. R. CATTERMOLK, B.D. and the Rev. HENRY STEBBING, D.D. To which are prefixed Original Essays, Memoirs, Notes, &c. by Dr. Pye Smith, Robert Southey, Esq. James Montgomery, Esq. Dr. Croly, the Rev. W. Trollope, and others. Fcp. 8vo. cloth lettered, price 4s. each vol.

The series comprises the following important Works.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S LIBERTY OF PROPHECYING; showing the Unreasonableness of prescribing to other Men's Faith; and the Iniquity of persecuting different Opinions.

CAVE'S LIVES of the APOSTLES and the FATHERS. 2 vols.

BATES'S SPIRITUAL PERFECTION UNFOLDED and ENFORCED; with an Introductory Essay by the Rev. JOHN PYE SMITH, D.D.

BISHOP HALL'S TREATISES, Devotional and Practical.

BAXTER'S DYING THOUGHTS.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S SELECT SERMONS.

BUTLER'S ANALOGY OF RELIGION, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature; to which are added, Two Brief Dissertations. With a Memoir of the Author, by the Rev. GEORGE CROLY, LL.D.

DR. WATT'S LYRIC POEMS. With a Biographical Essay, by ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq. LL.D.

BEVERIDGE'S PRIVATE THOUGHTS. To which is added, THE NECESSITY OF FREQUENT COMMUNION. 2 vols.

CAVE'S PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY. With an Historical Account of Paganism under the First Christian Emperors; and the Lives of Justin Martyr and St. Cyprian. 2 vols.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON'S EXPOSITIONS of the CREED, the LORD'S PRAYER, and the TEN COMMANDMENTS, &c. &c.

SERMONS, selected from the Works of the most Eminent Divines of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. 3 vols.

THE HON. ROBERT BOYLE on the Veneration due to God;—On things above Reason;—and on the Style of the Holy Scriptures. With an Essay, by H. ROGERS, Esq.

VICESIMUS KNOX'S CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

HOWE'S SELECT TREATISES. With a Memoir, by THOMAS TAYLOR, Author of "The Life of Cowper," "Memoirs of Bishop Heber," &c.

SACRED POETRY of the SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. 2 vols. including the whole of Giles Fletcher's "Christ's Victory and Triumph," with copious selections from Spenser, Davies, Sandys, P. Fletcher, Wither, Bishop King, Quarles, Hebert, and Milton.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S LIFE of CHRIST, 3 vols. With an Introductory Essay to each Part, by the Rev. HENRY STEBBING, D.D.

LOCKE on the REASONABLENESS of CHRISTIANITY. With an Appendix, containing an Analysis of the First and Second Vindications, &c.

BISHOP BUTLER'S FIFTEEN SERMONS, preached at the Roll's Chapel; and CHARGE to the CLERGY of DURHAM in 1751. With an Appendix, by BISHOP HALIFAX.

BISHOP HORNE'S COMMENTARY on the PSALMS, with Life of the Author, by the Rev. W. JONES, of Nayland; and an Introductory Essay, by JAMES MONTGOMERY, Esq. 3 vols.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S HOLY LIVING and HOLY DYING, with a Sketch of his Life and Times, by the Rev. GEORGE CROLY, LL.D. 2 vols.

Books for the Young.

- ABBOTT.—THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN**; or, a Familiar Illustration of the Principles of Christian Duty. By JACOB ABBOTT, Principal of the Mount Vernon Female School, U.S. With a Preface, &c., by the Rev. J. W. CUNNINGHAM, M.A., Vicar of Harrow. A New Edition. 12mo. 3s. cloth.
- **THE WAY TO DO GOOD.** Designed as a Sequel to the above. Edited by MORELL. 12mo. 2s. 6d. cloth.
- ALDA.—THE BRITISH CAPTIVE.** By AGNES STRICKLAND, Author of "Queens of England," &c. 12mo. 4s. 6d. cloth, gilt.
- ANIMALS** and their MEANS of SUBSISTENCE. Illustrated with superior Engravings. In an elegant volume, square 16mo. cloth, 3s. 6d.
- AUNT CARRY'S BALLADS for CHILDREN.** By the Hon. Mrs. NORTON. With Illustrations, by ABSOLON. Small 4to. 6s. plain; 10s. 6d. coloured.
- BERTHA'S JOURNAL DURING A VISIT to her UNCLE in ENGLAND.** 12mo. cloth, 7s. 6d.
- COBBIN.—SCRIPTURE COMPARISONS for the YOUNG.** By INGRAM COBBIN, A.M. Embellished by numerous Wood Engravings, in 18mo. price 2s. 6d. bound in cloth.
- **SCRIPTURE PROVERBS for the YOUNG.** Illustrated by numerous engravings on Wood, in 18mo. price 2s. 6d. bound in cloth, with gilt edges.
- EDGEWORTH'S EARLY LESSONS.** 4 vols. 18mo. 10s. cloth.
- **PARENT'S ASSISTANT**; or, Stories for Children. 3 vols. 18mo. 7s. 6d. half-bound.
- **MORAL TALES.** New Edition, in 1 vol. 12mo. 6s. cloth.
- ELIZABETH.—THE DESERTER.** By CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH. 12mo. 3s. 6d.
- **THE MUSEUM.** By the same Author. 12mo. 2s. 6d.
- **CHAPTERS ON FLOWERS.** New Edition. 12mo. cloth, 3s.
- EVENINGS AT HOME.** By Dr. AIKIN, and Mrs. BARBAULD. New Edition. Illustrated. 12mo. 5s. cloth.
- FLETCHER, DR.—SERMONS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.—**
FIRST SERIES: the Wisdom and Glory of God. 432 pages, demy 18mo. with 12 highly-finished Engravings, 4s. 6d.
SECOND SERIES: a Course of Sermons on Obedience to Parents. 432 pages, and 10 Plates, 4s. 6d.
THIRD SERIES: on the Seasons and Events of Providence. 432 pages, and 9 Illustrations, 4s. 6d.
- The above will be found a most useful and valuable aid to Sunday School teachers, and those engaged in the instruction of youth.
- HACK'S WINTER EVENINGS**; or, Tales of Travellers. 6s. cloth.
- **THE HAPPY TRANSFORMATION**; or, the History of a London Apprentice. Third Edition, 18mo. cloth, 1s.
- "I should be glad if my notice of this little work should induce numbers of young men to purchase and read it."—*Rev. J. A. James.*
- HOFLAND'S (MRS.) SON of a GENIUS.** Fourteenth Edition. 3s. cloth.
- **DAUGHTER of a GENIUS.** Sixth Edition. 2s. 6d. cloth.
- **EMILY'S REWARD**; or, the Holiday Trip to Paris, 2s. 6d. cloth.
- JUVENILE MUSEUM of ENTERTAINMENT.** A Book of Plates for the Young, with Descriptive Letter-press. 8vo. cloth. 6s. 6d.
- KENNEDY'S ANNA ROSS**; a Story for Children. Eighth Edition. 2s. 6d.
- **DECISION**; or, Religion must be all or is nothing. 2s. 6d. cloth.
- **FATHER CLEMENT**; a Roman Catholic Story. 4s. 6d. cloth.
- **PROFESSION is not PRINCIPLE**; or, the Name of Christian is not Christianity. Seventh Edition. 3s. 6d. cloth.

- LOUDON'S (MRS.) GLIMPSES of NATURE, and OBJECTS of INTEREST DESCRIBED, during a VISIT to the ISLE of WIGHT. Square, 3s. 6d. cloth.
- MAMMA'S BIBLE STORIES, and SEQUEL. Each 3s. 6d. cloth.
- MARY and Her MOTHER. Being Scriptural Stories for very Young Children. Fourth Edition. 18mo. cloth, 3s.
- MIRIAM; or, the Power of Truth. A Jewish Tale. By the Author of "Influence." Seventh Edition. Foolscep, 6s. cloth.
- THE ORPHANS of GLENBIRKIE; a Story founded on Fact. Third Thousand. 12mo. 2s. 6d.
- PEEP OF DAY; or, a Series of the earliest Religious Instruction that the Infant Mind is capable of receiving. Thirty-third Thousand, revised. 18mo. 3s. cloth.
- LINE UPON LINE. A Second Series of the above, by the same Author. Twentieth Thousand. 2 vols. 18mo. 2s. 6d. each.
- PIERRE and his FAMILY; a Story of the Waldenses, 3s. cloth.
- POLLOK'S TALES of the COVENANTERS. 3s. 6d. cloth.
- RICHMOND, LEIGH.—DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER. 32mo. Illuminated cover, 6d., cloth 8d.
- YOUNG COTTAGER. 32mo. Illuminated cover, 6d., cloth, 8d.
- ROBERTS' (MISS) RUINS and OLD TREES, associated with Memorable Events in English History. Crown 8vo. cloth, 6s.
- ROBINSON CRUSOE. A New Edition, with Stothard's Illustrations. Square 8vo. 7s. 6d. cloth.
- SAILOR'S BRIDE; or, Home; its Joys and its Sorrows. A Domestic Tale. Third Edition. 12mo. 2s. 6d. cloth, gilt.
- TAYLOR'S (JANE) CONTRIBUTIONS of Q. Q. Foolscep, 7s. cloth.
- HYMNS for INFANT MINDS. Cloth, 1s. 6d.
- NURSERY RHYMES. Cloth, 1s. 6d.
- ORIGINAL POEMS. 2 vols. 3s. cloth.
- THE MODERN BRITISH PLUTARCH; or, Lives of Men Distinguished in the Recent History of our Country for their Talents, Virtues, and Achievements. By W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D., of Trinity College, Dublin. Author of "A Manual of Ancient and Modern History," &c. 12mo. price 6s. cloth.
- TRIMMER'S (MRS.) HISTORY of the ROBINS,—Dicky, Robin, Flapsey, and Pecksey. Fourteenth Edition, with numerous Cuts by Bewick. 18mo. cloth, 2s.
- TYTLER'S TALES of MANY LANDS. New Edition, with coloured Plates. 12mo. 5s. cloth.
- THE WONDER-SEEKER; or, The History of Charles Douglas. With Illustrations by ABSOLON. Foolscep 8vo. price 4s. 6d. cloth.
- WATTS'S DIVINE and MORAL SONGS. Illustrated by Anecdotes and Reflections, by the Rev. INGRAM COBBIN, M.A. Embellished with numerous Wood Engravings, 18mo. cloth, lettered, price 1s. 6d.
- WEBB'S (MRS.) NAOMI; or, The Last Days of Jerusalem. Third Edition. Foolscep, 7s. 6d. cloth.
- YOUNG LADY'S FRIEND (The); a Manual of Practical Advice and Instruction to Young Females entering upon the Duties of Life after quitting School. Foolscep, 3s. 6d. cloth.
- YOUTH'S BIBLE CYCLOPÆDIA. Illustrated with upwards of 120 new and beautiful Engravings, by WHIMPER. In square 16mo. cloth, extra gilt, 3s. 6d.

Works by the Rev. John Cumming, D.D.,

Minister of the Scotch National Church, Crown Court, Covent Garden.

"IS CHRISTIANITY FROM GOD?" A Manual of Christian Evidences for Sunday School Teachers, City Missionaries, and Young Persons, fcp. 8vo. cloth, 3s.

"We never read a work of this description which gave us so much satisfaction. It is a work of the utmost value."—*Ecclesiastical Times*.

"It is drawn up with much care, clearness, and earnestness."—*Aberdeen Journal*.

"The topics contained in this volume are treated with intelligence, clearness, and eloquence."—*Dr. Vaughan's Review*.

"As a popular compendium of Christian Evidence, we thoroughly recommend this volume."—*Nonconformist*.

THE TRUE SUCCESSION. A Sermon. Third Edition. fcp. 8vo. price 6d. sewed.

"The True Succession contains Dr. Cumming's magnificent tribute to the Christian worthies of different denominations, who formed the true successors of the Apostles during the modern era of evangelical Protestantism, more especially in our own highly-favoured country."—*Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Journal*.

INFANT SALVATION; or, All Saved who Die in Infancy. Specially addressed to Mothers mourning the loss of Infants and Children. Second Edition, fcp. 8vo. cloth, price 2s. 6d.

THE BAPTISMAL FONT. An Exposition of the Nature and Obligations of Christian Baptism, with an Appendix. Uniform with the above, price 2s. 6d.

A MESSAGE FROM GOD: or, Thoughts on Religion for Thinking Men, Second Edition, fcp. 8vo. cloth, 2s. 6d.

LECTURES FOR THE TIMES. An Exposition of Tridentine and Tractarian Popery. Beautifully printed in one thick 8vo. volume, cloth, price 7s. 6d., or in 12mo. small paper, price 5s. cloth.

"In these Lectures, he gives the fullest scope to all his high powers. Careful research, acute argument, brilliant illustration, graphic description, and eloquent appeal, all unite in enriching and embellishing his pages, alluring the most indifferent to read, and compelling the most prejudiced against his views to pause and consider."—*Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Journal*.

OCCASIONAL DISCOURSES. A Volume of Sermons. In one vol. post 8vo. price 2s. cloth.

CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM; or, The Claims of Home and Country to Christian Consideration. An Essay. 8vo. sewed, price 4s.

"OUR FATHER." A Week's Family Prayers. In 18mo. cloth, price 1s. 6d.

A PORTRAIT OF DR. CUMMING. Large Paper, India proofs, 5s. Prints, 2s. 6d.

